

The New
REPUBLIC

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Wednesday October 14, 1931

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on Bigger and Better Navies

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by J. B. S. HARDMAN

Mergers, Preferred
a review by
STUART CHASE

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The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

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The Week

ON THE same day the United States Chamber of Commerce and the American Federation of Labor proposed reforms in our economic system to bring stability. The principal suggestion of the Chamber is to amend the anti-trust laws in order to permit contracts among competitors for control of production, under governmental supervision which could invalidate such contracts if found not in the public interest. Another change would permit businesses which desired to combine to discover in advance whether the combination would be considered legal. All this would be in the interest of planned production. The Chamber is also in favor of restricting speculation, whether in commodities or securities, since this tends toward inflation and overexpansion of productive facilities. It comes out strongly for disarmament, on the ground that war is the major threat to stability. It wants a small National Economic Council as an advisory body to business on major or general policies. It favors the extension of planning in individual companies. And it gives general praise to Gerard Swope's insurance

plan, discussed elsewhere in this issue. The members of the committee are representative business men and bankers, who will be accorded respectful attention among their cohorts.

THE American Federation of Labor, in the report of its Executive Council, pays more attention to emergency measures; it wants a national conference of employers and labor in order to push a method for immediately extending employment by making jobs. It urges, as a measure for spreading work, its long favored campaign for the five-day week and the shorter workday. It wants to maintain existing wage rates and standards. It urges immediate and universal prohibition of child labor. The Federation leaders favor strengthening of public employment exchanges, but not compulsory unemployment insurance. This will come, however, they warn, if industrial leadership continues in its failure to provide work. For the longer range, it wants a National Economic Council—not, as in the Chamber of Commerce plan, representatives of business interests only, but created by government and containing representatives of labor as well. The President, it says, should call a conference to discuss this project, whose aim should be scientifically planned production on a national scale.

THE suggestions of both the Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Labor include desirable measures, and both, in spite of their differences, tend significantly in the right direction. Planned production is, of course, the basic essential which they both recognize. We believe the Federation's attitude toward this matter is, on the whole, sounder than that of organized business. While it is obvious that industries must be organized as units in order to plan production at all, it is far from obvious that industries allowed to make contracts for restriction of output under vague and negative public control would either aid stabilization of employment or serve those essential social aims emphasized by the Federation when it demands better wage standards, more leisure and the elimination of child labor. It is important that we should know what we are planning for—whether for profits for a few obtained by stabilization at a low level of output, or

better standards for the majority. The aims of planning must be set by a body in which the workers are strongly represented. And private industry cannot do the job alone. Government is our biggest industry and must share largely in planning endeavors, not only as a producer, but as a representative of the consumers and the broader public interest.

THE British general election on October 28 would be decisive only if the Labor party obtained a majority in the House of Commons; and while prophecy is as dangerous in this case as it usually is, such a development seems highly unlikely. Instead, we shall probably have a half-hearted success for the National government, which will muddle along practically as it is doing now. Its Conservative, Liberal and ex-Labor supporters are too completely divided among themselves to present an aggressive, well defined common program to the country in this election. Many of its supporters want to go over openly to a tariff policy, overlooking the fact that devaluation of the pound has already acted powerfully in that direction; but there is not sufficient unanimity in support of this policy to give the election the color of a mandate from the country on this issue. The chief usefulness of the campaign is the chance it will give the Labor party to put before the country its new and more radical program, of which an important part will be the demand for immediate and drastic government control, if not actually government ownership, of the British banking system.

THREE important developments have taken place in Spain during the past few days. Suffrage has been granted to women, so-called "idle" lands are to be distributed to unemployed peasants, and the quarrel with the Catholic Church entered a new phase with the recall by the Vatican of Cardinal Primate Segura y Saenz. Of these, probably the most important at the moment is the granting of the suffrage to women. Although this seems a liberal gesture, it has been opposed by many of the best Spanish leaders—including, for instance, Señorita Victoria Kent—on the ground that the women, overwhelmingly illiterate and untutored in anything except household life, are not ready for the vote, and will use their power to support black reaction and the Church. The distribution of idle land to the peasants is probably the beginning of a much wider movement. Though it is supposed to be only for a year, and for the benefit only of peasants who are now unemployed, Spain's vast estates seem likely to go the way of similar estates in Russia and elsewhere; such a process once begun is difficult to stop. Incidentally, the great ranches devoted to the breeding of fighting bulls are included in the category of "idle" lands—a fact which may lead to the decline of bull fighting. As for the recall of the Cardinal (who had already fled for safety after the revolution), it is an important victory for the Republican government in

its negotiations with the Vatican, since he represented at its worst the Church's old arrogance and interference in secular affairs.

WHEN Senator Wagner's bill to establish a coordinated system of national employment offices was passed at the last session of Congress, Mr. Hoover promptly vetoed the measure. The Department of Labor, he claimed, already included a Federal Employment Service which had worked during the War and which could be quickly reorganized. The "reorganization" by Secretary Doak was begun, and rosy reports of progress were soon made public. Henceforth, no employers need resort to any private employment agency, the Secretary of Labor announced over the radio on July 4. And Mr. Hoover himself stated on August 4 that work had been found for 636,689 persons, thanks to the "successful" nationwide employment service. But a very different picture is painted by impartial investigators who have been looking into the workings of the system. Their findings are summarized in *The American Labor Legislation Review* for September. Sad confusion and duplication of effort are described. It is true that state directors have been appointed (in some cases for political reasons); they have been given stenographers and desks; but they have known little or nothing about their work; they have merely supervised already existing agencies. The federal government, according to statements by various state labor-department officials, has claimed credit for work accomplished by the state and locally operated offices. It has failed to set up a really integrated public employment service for the United States, such as the situation cries for. A few weeks ago, the official who had been director general of the Federal Employment Service for ten years handed in his resignation, referring to the "futility of the new set-up of inexperienced men," and describing the reorganized service as "ineffectual, unsatisfactory and bitterly disappointing."

THE "American system," the system of rugged profit seeking by noble individuals, loses important partisans from day to day and week to week. Unrest grows rapidly in the United States—less rapidly, it would seem, among the millions who are increasingly dependent upon charity than among groups of persons in positions of authority. Now the Episcopal Church is the latest religious body to join in the general protest against our condition of economic confusion. The pastoral letters issued by the general convention of Episcopalian bishops at Denver, October 1, holds that the depression and its unemployment are "un-Christian." "An acquisitive society," it declares, has reached a crisis precipitated by "the competitive, profit-seeking principle upon which, it has hitherto been assumed, general prosperity is based." Though advocating no particular method, the Church calls upon the employers in its communion "to labor for the adoption of a

plan or plans which shall coördinate production and consumption, ensure continuity of employment and provide security of income to the workers of the nation."

A FEW weeks ago a book was published anonymously under the title of "Washington Merry-Go-Round." Like other similar volumes, it dealt more candidly than respectfully with various important political figures, including President Hoover. When this book was reviewed in *Time*, a list of the putative authors was published; it included Robert S. Allen, the able head of *The Christian Science Monitor's* Washington bureau. Twenty-four hours later, Allen had been dismissed from his post. Persistent Washington rumor says that his dismissal was the result of direct instigation by the White House, President Hoover having been angered by the reference to himself and his friends which appeared in the book. Neither the President nor any of the editors of *The Christian Science Monitor*, so far as we can learn, has taken steps to deny the report, which has been published in several places.

THE next chapter in this story has to do with the attempt of the publishers of "Washington Merry-Go-Round" to advertise it in the capital. They submitted an advertisement to *The Washington Star*, ultra-conservative, pudgy journal and one of Mr. Hoover's most loyal supporters. The *Star* refused to print the advertisement, which reads as follows:

As a result of the publication of "Washington Merry-Go-Round," an anonymous book, the authorship of which still remains unknown, a prominent Washington correspondent has now been discharged by his paper because it was publicly intimated that he was one of the book's authors. The sinister influences, mostly political, which have been exercised toward discovering the author or authors of "Washington Merry-Go-Round" have created a feeling of terror and surveillance among Washington correspondents. Many of these unusually able and upright newspaper men are in fear that the axe will fall on their heads if their names are publicly mentioned as possible authors. We have reached a period of secret censorship of the press as effective as Star Chamber methods.

This sort of thing will do nothing to improve the relations between the White House and the Washington correspondents as a whole, relations which are rapidly degenerating into open warfare. Secretary Joslin's recent request that he be consulted before anything is printed regarding possible new actions by the President on important questions was generally interpreted as a flat and flagrant attempt at censorship, and the journalists openly rebelled. With some honorable exceptions, the Washington correspondents have not heretofore been conspicuously jealous for the dignity of their profession, but even they have their limits.

AN INTERESTING aftermath of the "Washington Merry-Go-Round" affair is the metamorphosis of the magazine called *The Washingtonian*. This periodical, one of the large crop of imitators of *The New Yorker* which have appeared from time to time in various cities, has been taken over by a group of newspapermen whose point of view is much the same as that expressed in the book; and they propose to continue the same sort of revelations from month to month. They start off bravely by debunking Secretary Stimson, Representative Sol Bloom, Governor Emmerson of Illinois, Chairman Stone of the Farm Board, and a job-lot of others in the public eye. We wish *The Washingtonian* all the luck in the world, and the paper will need it: the number of people in the national capital who are potential readers of such a journal must be alarmingly small. At the same time, there is no group anywhere more in need of deflating than the one into which the cheerful editors propose to stick their irreverent monthly pins.

IF China had a large navy and the necessary money, we should probably now be seeing the opening stages of a war with Mexico. The humiliation to which China has just been subjected by the Mexicans is comparable only to the demand of victorious Turkey that the defeated Greeks should take home with them all persons of their blood on Turkish soil. The governments of several Mexican provinces have ruthlessly expelled all Chinese. They gave them so few days' grace that the Chinese had no time to sell their property, and lost millions of dollars in forced liquidation. They complain, moreover, that in order to obtain the papers necessary to leave the country in compliance with the new law, they have been robbed of additional large sums by Mexican officials. The cause of complaint is that the Chinese prosper in Mexico but do not spend their money there; that they transmit it all back to China, where they go when they reach an age for retirement; that they are clannish, and take no part in the reconstruction of Mexico which is now engaging the national energies. These charges are probably true; they could with propriety be made regarding Chinese emigrants to any other country in the world, but this is not wholly the fault of the Chinese. Aside from questions of the justice of the Mexican measures, they were put into effect with a suddenness and severity for which there seems no excuse.

WE HAVE seldom had a chance to commend the decisions of the federal Department of Immigration, particularly when these decisions have to do with the deportation of alien radicals. Last week, however, we were delighted to learn that Mr. Harry E. Hull, Commissioner General of Immigration, has finally decided that the Chinese student, Li Tao Hsuan, instead of being forced to return to his own country, where as a member of the Communist party he would most certainly be executed,

will be permitted to go to Russia, where the Soviet government has offered him political refuge. Of course there is no valid reason why Li should be deported at all; but even so it is reassuring to learn that instead of being executed for his political beliefs, he will merely be exiled. Whether this action is a sign that the Department of Immigration henceforth means to permit alien Communists to select the country to which they wish to be deported, it is, perhaps, too early to say. But the action in Li's case at least establishes a precedent of voluntary deportation which may influence the decisions in the cases of other aliens whom our government has threatened with expulsion.

THE dear old D. A. R. is in again. These estimable ladies recently held an exhibition of "Communist propaganda" in Chicago; and we are enormously edified to learn that two recent issues of *The New Republic* were displayed as dangerous and subversive documents. These were issues which described in detail the appalling amount of unemployment in the United States, and the inadequacy of the measures thus far taken to cope with the resultant suffering. The D. A. R., of course, could not be expected to know that *The New Republic* is hated and abused quite as much by the ultra-radicals as it is by their own type of ossified patriots. But in one sense they are perfectly correct: the needless hunger and misery which are so widespread in America today are certainly making radicals far faster than any amount of "Soviet gold" could do.

Mr. Swope's Insurance Plan

MR. GERARD SWOPE'S plan for industrial stabilization, described several weeks ago in his speech to the electrical industry, continues to arouse comment. Norman Thomas attacks it (with qualifications) on almost the same day on which a committee of the United States Chamber of Commerce praises it. Its vitality, in comparison with the utterances of other industrialists, is due to the fact that Mr. Swope proposed a perfectly definite and tangible change, rather than venting a generalization in favor of rugged individualism or a sermon on optimism.

Mr. Swope also gave the impression of meaning what he said. For years business men have been declaring that unemployment ought to be dealt with, or would be dealt with, by private industry; but they have said this in order to prevent government from dealing with it, and have done nothing themselves. American industrial leadership has been a dog in the manger of unemployment policy. Mr. Swope, too, believes that industry, rather than government, ought to deal with unemployment. But he suggests a specific way of doing so, and he advocates federal legislation, not only to facilitate

this action by industry, but to compel it in case industry does not act of its own accord within three years after the passage of the law. Without latent legal compulsion, Mr. Swope's plan would be just another alibi, because it would never be widely adopted. It is well to remember this during future discussion of the matter.

The proposal centers about measures to be taken by industries as units. In order to make such action possible, existing trade associations would be extended, or new ones formed, until every employer with fifty or more employees was a member of the appropriate industrial organization. The primary purpose of these bodies would be to stabilize unemployment by activities, not only of the kinds which they now carry on, but of other kinds at present forbidden by the anti-trust laws. But the public, says Mr. Swope, will never grant industry the necessary freedom to combine in this way unless it is assured that the power will be used in the public interest. Therefore he outlines in some detail a comprehensive system of social insurance to be installed by the trade associations. This insurance—especially that against unemployment—will give the worker a feeling of greater security so that he will be willing to spend more freely during depressions, and it will be a useful interim measure before industry succeeds at its major job of providing work for all. We shall reserve until a future time extended comment on the proposal of stabilization through trade associations, and confine our discussion at present to the insurance aspects of the plan. This is a simple matter, one of more immediate urgency, and is something which might be carried out by associations without modifying the anti-trust laws.

Schemes would be drawn for each industry, embodying workmen's compensation, life and disability insurance, old-age pensions and unemployment insurance. To most of these forms of protection both employers and employees would contribute, but government would not. A worker moving from one concern to another would retain his protection. If he moved to another industry, some arrangement would be made to transfer with him the funds accumulated to his credit.

That a scheme of this kind would be immensely superior to insurance provided by individual employers is obvious. In the first place, the insurance would really be provided; while if we wait for the mass of individual employers to move in this direction we shall wait forever. It would be far more secure than insurance or pensions depending on the solvency of single concerns. It would be less restrictive of the freedom of the worker; it would not bind him to low wages or poor conditions offered in one establishment because of his interest in some plan to promote his "loyalty." And, as Mr. Swope points out, it would not provide the individual employer, who might be worried about his reserves for pensions or his accident rate, with the

incentive which he now has for refusing jobs to older men.

Mr. Swope believes it would be equally superior to insurance made compulsory by state laws. There is more doubt about this contention. It is true that many states are backward in passing such laws, and the method of action by states is therefore slow in making protection nationwide. It is also true that employees fear state insurance because it enforces heavier burdens in some states than in others and hence may establish competitive handicaps. These "handicaps" are probably so small as to be negligible. Nevertheless, the belief that they are real exists, and hampers the passage of labor legislation. Many states already have measures for workmen's compensation, a growing number are establishing old-age pensions, a few may soon turn to unemployment insurance. But in so far as employers are required by these laws to contribute to the necessary funds, they are allowed to "contract out" and carry their own risks if they can equal or improve upon the legal standards. Existing or future legislation is therefore no bar to Mr. Swope's plan; indeed, it may furnish a powerful incentive for employers to urge its adoption.

Some labor leaders have attacked the Swope plan because it would be, in practice, administered by employing interests as a sort of feudal estate. On paper the plan provides for representation of labor in drafting and administering the insurance, but in fact the employees of the bulk of American industry are not organized in bona-fide unions, and the representation would probably turn out to be of the hand-fed company-union type. This is a real danger, but it is a danger which adheres to any form of social insurance and, indeed, to any industrial policy whatever, so long as the labor movement is weak. It is an argument which can be used legitimately against the bitterly anti-union policy of American employers in general, as well as in favor of a more energetic organizing activity in the labor movement. But it is hardly an argument against this special plan.

There are a number of flaws in the unemployment-insurance part of the program in particular. What would protect against the hazards of joblessness the large number of workers who are employed by concerns having fewer than fifty employees? And what would protect those wage earners who had not worked long enough for any particular firm so that they could qualify under this scheme? Would this mean a large reserve of unprotected casual labor, at whose expense the employment of the rest might be stabilized? Another serious omission is the failure to provide for a system of national coördinated employment exchanges, which is absolutely essential to the operation of any kind of effective unemployment insurance.

The best policy for those who have hitherto been working for unemployment protection would appear to be to hope that industry in general would be converted to the Swope plan, and meanwhile

to redouble their efforts in behalf of the standard measures already framed and introduced. We shall need in any case the federally coördinated system of public employment exchanges provided for in the Wagner bill, passed last year by Congress and vetoed by the President. We shall need compulsory unemployment insurance under state laws, to fill the gaps in the Swope scheme, if not indeed to fill the larger gap arising from industry's probable failure to accept that scheme at all. If American employers in general ever do voluntarily assume their responsibility for employment, it will only be because of a well grounded fear that if they do not act immediately, the voters and legislatures will.

The Lesson of the Legion

PRESIDENT Hoover's appearance before the American Legion at Detroit was a portent of sinister significance. The Chief Magistrate of the Republic did not go to enjoy the society of his fellow patriots or to congratulate them on their military achievements. He went simply and humbly to entreat them not to use their power to extract some \$2,000,000,000 from the public treasury. That they can do this if they will was evident from his speech, and from that of Commander O'Neil, who told the Legion that it was the most powerful organization in the world. Clearly the men whom Hoover and ex-Secretary of War Baker plastered with flattery as the saviors of their country have it in their power very nearly to wreck it, and Mr. Hoover was extremely anxious lest they should do so. That they have held their hand on this occasion means only that the crisis has been postponed. No one can doubt that the Legion will get its \$2,000,000,000 within a few years, and then come back for more.

It must be admitted at once that the Legion has a case. The men who went overseas to fight (it is a fiction agreeably acquiesced in by Hoover and Baker that the Legion is entirely composed of fighting men) and lost their opportunity to make money during the good years of the business harvest, naturally believe that they are entitled to compensation adjusted with reference to the opportunities which they missed. The original idea of a soldiers' bonus was linked with that of special taxation of war profit, much of which was exorbitant. Again, the tradition of pensions for service in war is so firmly established in the United States that no one should be surprised at the Legion for using it. When Mr. Dickinson was Secretary of War in President Taft's Cabinet, he had to pass on a mass of claims for pensions arising out of disabilities incurred in the war in the Philippines. He noted that of two battalions, representing respectively east and west Tennessee, the first claimed some 85 percent of total disability, and the second only 6 percent. Obviously, the difference came from the fact that east Tennessee was loyal during the Civil

War, and pensions from the government were general in that region, while west Tennessee went with the Confederacy. So confident were the east Tennesseans of the success of their claims that in many cases they jestingly laid their "total disability" to diseases of the womb. With the country cheerfully paying pensions for wars which ended in 1812 and 1865, it is not to be wondered at that the survivors of a far more strenuous and dangerous struggle feel themselves entitled to compensation.

A further point of comparison between the Civil War and the World War strengthens the Legion's case. The idealism which accompanied the former still remains to light the last of its victims to their graves. In a sense, they fought for the existence of their country through the preservation of the Union. The American Legion, the eloquence of Messrs. Hoover and Baker to the contrary, did nothing of the sort. Moreover, the sentiment which gathered about their performance has evaporated with the discovery that it was largely based on falsehood. Only the other day the chief daily paper of Detroit, the city where the Legion held its convention, remarked quite casually and as a matter of course that American participation in the War was "criminal madness." Of course, it is not to be expected that the Legion will ever officially admit this view, but the general acceptance of it, the tarnishing of their laurels by the debunking of the cause for which they fought, necessarily reacts on the minds of intelligent Legionnaires as individuals. The fact that they served under compulsion, not as volunteers, strengthens their sense of having been let down. The provision of insurance, which was introduced to guarantee the country against the enormous liability of pensions, naturally goes the way of other hastily drawn war agreements. Now, there is no use crying over milk spilt so lavishly during the administration of Woodrow Wilson. The only advantage to be derived from it is a lesson to the American people that if they go to war they will surely be gypped by their Allies and mulcted by their soldiers in a sum comparable to the cost of a hostile invasion including indemnity.

With the fullest understanding of the point of view of the American Legion, however, it is impossible not to regard its existence as a menace. And for this menace the American people, and more especially those of the class which now looks on the bonus with trepidation, are responsible. Immediately after the War, Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. was let loose with a subvention, said to amount to \$250,000, to bring the returning soldiers into an organization which should make the country safe for democracy as understood by those who had put up the money. The American Legion has in many ways been true to its founders. In movements for the suppression of civil liberties, for the oppression of workers, for the promotion of armament and for the promulgation of a blatant and truculent nationalism, the Legion has been a leader. It showed at its worst, doubtless, in the attack on

the I. W. W. of Centralia, in the mutilation and murder of Wesley Everett, himself a soldier in the War, in the packing of the courtroom where eight members of the I. W. W. were sentenced to prison for forty-five years. This behavior might be explained as the irresponsible action of a local group, were it not for the fact that the Legion demanded and obtained national sanction for it by bringing President Harding to lay wreaths on the graves of the men who were the aggressors in the attack. Although a minority of the jury have stated that they brought in a verdict under intimidation, with a fear that if they acquitted the accused these would later be lynched, the American Legion, with a few notable exceptions among its members, stands for the conviction, and refuses to take one step toward the righting of a wrong as intolerable to one's idea of justice as that done to Tom Mooney.

But individual veterans are not immune from the common ills besetting the country, and their discontent, bound to be great in a time like this, sometimes forces even their official body off the reservation. It is no longer among the ranks of those respectables who "drink Wet but vote Dry"—in spite of the embarrassment which the stand for beer causes the President and the Republican party. And it made a gesture in behalf of economic planning by adopting Mr. Howard Coffin's resolution calling on the President to recreate the wartime Council of National Defense, on the ground that the present industrial crisis is a national emergency barely second to that of war. It will be remembered that Mr. Coffin was a large figure in the economic war machine and that out of the Council grew the Food, Fuel and Railroad Administrations, the Shipping Board and eventually the War Industries Board itself. Though Socialists have denounced this resolution as a call for Fascism, it must be even more unwelcome to the President and the great capitalists who still rest their faith in rugged individualism. There is here a lesson to the ruling class, and to the American people generally, that war, though slain by victory and buried by treaty, returns to haunt its makers. "Let them who raise the spell beware the fiend."

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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Making a Bigger and Better Navy

IN DUE COURSE the representatives of the Great Powers will assemble to consider armaments. Economy suggests a reduction; fear of revolution to follow another war haunts the boldest of the "natural-born fighters." At this grand conclave will appear high-hatted diplomats looking wise, bespangled naval officers wearing airs of omniscience and assurance, hopeful pacifists dreaming dreams, advocates of peace with their appropriate "formulas," agents of the heavy industries safeguarding profits, and many journalists, always worldly wise in small things and usually devoid of historic sense. And around the edges will hover Bolshevik observers convinced that capitalists cannot develop protective intelligence and hence are doomed in advance, twist and turn as they will. Success means defeat to the chief participants and failure means disaster still more magnificent in the next great day.

Unfortunately for the functioning of the conference, the intellectual background has not been prepared. In spite of the millions spent by peace societies for research and propaganda, there does not exist in any language a realistic description and analysis of all the forces now at work and all the fundamental problems at stake in armament rivalries. What is national interest? Who has the right to define it? What is adequate defense? Adequate to what and to whom? Why do armies and navies grow bigger and better? What is to be gained by war? Who gains it, when, as and if? Do navalism and imperialism pay? Pay whom? The questions are not even asked officially and the materials for answering them are not yet assembled.

Happily, however, there is now available one excellent treatise on a phase of the subject, which those who wish understanding instead of illusion may consult. At the close of the World War the secret archives of Germany were extensively opened, and it is now possible for one nation on earth to know what went on behind its governmental façade during momentous years, to discover how navalism operates—its methods, hopes and mentality. Taking full advantage of this situation, Dr. Eckart Kehr has given us a deep insight into the political, social and ideological presuppositions of German imperialism in his "Schlachtfloottenbau und Parteipolitik 1894-1902" (Berlin, 1930)—a work which is thoroughly documented and has wrought havoc among the apologists of von Tirpitz and company. Dr. Kehr's book opens with an introduction on the evolution of opinion respecting naval imperialism from 1867 to 1894. Then comes a minute survey of the rise and development of the battle over big navalism, sketched in meticulous detail, with data on

profit makers, prices of steel and shipyard stocks, intrigues, newspapers, journalists, officials, millionaires, propagandists and politicians, all set down with frosty precision. This is followed by a calm analysis of the "opinions" of parties, classes and orders of state on imperialism and the sea power. At the end is a section showing that the naval-armament struggle is a phase of the domestic social and economic conflict, mirrored in patriotic ideology. Not often since Eve handed Adam the apple have those who wish to distinguish truth from moonshine had a better opportunity to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge.

This close study of German naval policy furnishes hard lessons for those Marxians who think that ideas automatically arise from given economic conditions, inexorable in spirit and form, and also to the theorists who imagine that the world can be ruled by ideas without reference to realities. In the German chronicle we do not at the outset see capitalists and merchants drawing together on their own motion, evolving an inevitable ideology and swinging the government into line as their agency or tool. On the contrary, the clarification and elaboration of the big-navy policy for Germany was largely the work of Captain Alfred von Tirpitz and a small group of men whom he assembled around him.

That von Tirpitz knew precisely what he was doing, that he had picked England as "the enemy" at the outset, that he had a grand dream of German security, is nowhere apparent in the record. Personally ambitious, restless and eager for power, placed by fortune in the navy, he simply made the most of his opportunity. Assuming a kind of technical omniscience, he flatly decided that battleships were better than cruisers, and that squadron formation and line tactics were better than English empiricism. Having come to these conclusions with the dogmatism that usually characterizes the engineer, whose social knowledge is as a rule sadly deficient, von Tirpitz then cast about for the best way to sell his idea to the powers that ruled Germany, not overlooking the man in the street. After a brief search he hit upon the slogan that "the navy pays," that sea armaments make economic returns to industry, and that upon this hard foundation of economic cupidity must the ideological structure of navy propaganda be built.¹

Von Tirpitz' idea was not his own invention. Great Britain had long before found out by experience that the sea power was an efficient agency with

¹ Consider "The United States Navy as an Industrial Asset," Office of Naval Intelligence (Washington, 1924).

which to build empire, protect trade, exploit backward places and peoples and smash rivals. The British, to be sure, had not theorized much about it; they had been content to "rule the waves" in fact, to write the law of the sea and to dictate terms in all conflicts on the water. It had been left to an American, Captain Alfred T. Mahan, to formulate systematically the gospel of *Welt- und Machtpolitik* in his writings on the sea power in history—works written not without an eye to doing for the American navy what von Tirpitz wanted to do for his, and not without powerful effects on politicians devoted to the strenuous life, such as Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, and equally powerful effects on our captains of steel for whom Marcus A. Hanna was soon to speak so effectively in the Senate of the United States. As the noted naval critic, Sir John Laughton, said in commenting on Mahan's "Influence of the Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire," "the book is throughout a splendid apotheosis of English courage and English endurance, of English skill and English power, the more splendid, the more glorious as these are put forward not as a matter of boasting or of laudation, but philosophically, scientifically, as illustrating propositions in naval strategy or in commercial war."

Mahan's first "masterpiece" came out in 1890 and his second in 1892. Of the latter Sir John Laughton remarked, "important as it is to naval officers, [it] is still more so to the statesman, the administrator, the shipowner, the merchant and the tradesman." Both of these works went to the head of the Kaiser and von Tirpitz like heavy wine. In the spring of 1894, William II cabled Poultney Bigelow, his American admirer: "I am just now not reading but devouring Captain Mahan's book; and am trying to learn it by heart. It is a first-class work and classical in all points. It is on board all my ships and constantly quoted by my captains and officers." It was at this critical moment in world history that the Emperor exclaimed: "Our future lies upon the water," and "the trident must be in our fist."

Immediately, von Tirpitz had the "Influence of Sea Power upon History" translated and made it a kind of marine bible for his officers and propagandists, especially as it not only expounded the gospel of might but also indicated the parties who could be interested in the outcome, namely, statesmen, shipowners, merchants and tradesmen—from whom the possessors of shipyards and the manufacturers of armor plate were not sharply divorced. Old Germany, dozing on the land and still infected by Kantian idealism, was to be rudely awakened and set to "glorious" tasks, and the acquisitive instincts of every group likely to profit from the operation were now to be stirred by propaganda. At last, in Mahan's works, von Tirpitz had the scientific, systematic, economic and moral justification for the enterprise in hand.

Within less than ten years von Tirpitz had converted enough hesitant and uncertain Germans to his program to assure victory for his battle fleet. When his operations are examined in detail, they are found to fall into the following pattern: the preparation of "literature," the alignment of interested classes, the enlistment of facile journalists and publicists, the adjustment of party conflicts and the conquest of the intellectuals.

The literature of propaganda took all appropriate forms. A special division in the Navy Office assumed general charge of it. "A Yearbook of German Sea Interests" was founded under the collective editorship of "Nauticus" to amass, organize and present "data" bearing on the subject. The publication of "scientific" works of the "right direction" was undertaken. In the summer of 1897, Ernst von Halle, who had conveniently dropped his old name "Levy," was taken into the bureau of information, on the recommendation of Professor Schmoller, and combined his functions at the University of Berlin with that of adviser to the Navy Office, adding "learned" works on sea power and sea economics to the literature of propaganda. For the classes lower in the scale of culture, the Navy Office inspired articles on "The Navy in the Far East," "Morals among the Papuans," "The Regatta at Rio de Janeiro," and especially on the gravity of every "crisis" arising in international relations. To make sure that lay periodicals were kept current, the *Allgemeine Marine-und Handelskorrespondenz* was established and regularly supplied the public with specific "information" about the Navy, especially the close relation between economic and the sea power.

All this, however, was merely a beginning. Money by the billions could not be wrung from the nation unless its governors, particularly business men and agrarians, could be convinced. Although the fleet would "pay," according to the new philosophy, taxes had to be raised to meet the cost of construction. It was not difficult, of course, to enroll powder manufacturers, coal owners, armor-plate makers and ship builders. For them patriotism was clearly a paying proposition. If any of them had any doubts on the point, they were quickly reassured when they saw the stocks of pertinent industries shoot upward in a bull market as soon as the first great grant of money to the Navy had been voted. And after the building had begun and plants had been extended to meet additional requirements, gentlemen of this order thought the navy should be still bigger. Otherwise their enlarged establishments would be partly idle and, as they pitifully urged, their workmen would be unemployed. Among them all, apparently, there was not a single steel magnate to weep with Carnegie and Schwab over the thought of death and destruction to come. Indeed, taking advantage of the opportunity, the coal men of the Ruhr organized a syndicate, raised prices on the Navy, and in spite of its protests forced it to pay more per

ton than the rate on the world market. If some patriots were shocked at what seemed to be greed on the part of coal owners, they were not shocked enough to produce any effect on "the technical evolution of the situation."

While it was easy to prove to munition makers and shipbuilders the "necessity" for a big navy, that was not enough. Other capitalists, who were to be "paid" indirectly, if at all, could not see their earnings so easily. They had to be taught. So, the navy propagandists began to round up chambers of commerce by enlisting the great industrialists, apparently on the theory that the small yes-men in the rear would come when called. In this work the Navy League and the Colonial Society were circumspectly employed as adjuncts. If a big industrialist helped to finance a Navy League intellectual for a speaking tour before local chambers of commerce, it looked better and gave an air of disinterestedness to the operations of a patriotism founded on *Rentabilität*. Capitalists gathered under the auspices of the Navy League did not seem to be so capitalistic. For example, when the League gave a great naval dinner in Hamburg and assembled a goodly company containing twenty millionaires, it spread the mantle of idealism over an enterprise that served the country, God and the Kaiser (and the profit makers). Though some business men held back, fearing a possible war and the loss of trade through foreign antagonism, dimly suspecting that the great, wise and patriotic might be making a wrong guess, the majority were brought into the fold, singly and in groups, until at last capitalism was well mobilized behind the program and duly informed as to the best methods for swinging recalcitrant members of Parliament into line when navy budgets were voted. A slight word from those who knew would bring a sheaf of messages to the desk of any representative in the Reichstag who was not quite sure that ultimate good would come to his country from the bigger and better navy.

The agrarian side of the conflict over sea power presented many aspects. Out of the agricultural situation flowed no simple answer to this problem in statecraft. Yet obviously agriculture was tied into the question of armaments. Naturally the landed classes of Germany, led by the Prussian gentry, wished to preserve their ascendancy and to keep the Prussian monarchy and the Empire on the old foundation of the land and the army, commanded by officers of their social order. That much was clear.

Now if Germany went out upon the high seas, increased her industries and enlarged the industrial population, many things would happen to the economic system. The balance of power would pass to industrial and finance capitalism, and the landed aristocracy would be beaten by the bourgeoisie. If German manufacturers were to sell their commodities abroad on a large scale, they would import in

exchange huge quantities of agricultural produce, as a necessity of trade and to feed the growing multitudes of the cities; that meant fierce competition for the agrarians. A great battle fleet also offered perplexities. While the industrialists saw in it an instrument for keeping the seas open in time of war, the agrarians looked on that as a dubious blessing, because a blockade, instead of injuring them, would bring an immense upswing in the prices of their farm produce.

In the issue they also saw national defense imperiled. Remembering their history and suspecting that a two-front war might come out of the movement for revenge in France and the pressure of Russia on the Balkans, the agrarians resented a diversion of money from the army to the navy—a diversion that ultimately weakened the main lines of defense. Here again, however, the agrarians found themselves in a vicious circle: relatively poor in agricultural wealth, Germany could not hope to maintain by taxes on land an army large enough for defense against Russia and France. Besides all this, the whole conservative structure was weakened by the growth of social democracy and it was necessary to find a counterweight against the forces of revolution.

Hemmed in on all sides by a narrowing destiny, the agrarians chose what seemed to be the only way out—a compromise with capitalism, not because they were converted to *Welt- und Machtpolitik*, but because they had to make adjustments to live at all. So in the end they voted for the fleet demanded in the name of industry; in return, the capitalists granted to agriculture the tariffs on grain demanded for its protection; and the two groups united on a program designed to prevent the conquest of the state by social democracy. Perhaps never in history was a more fateful decision made by directing statesmen.

The foreign-policy correlate of this compromise had grave implications. On the one hand, it involved a surrender of the industrialists to the anti-Russia sentiment of the agrarians who had felt the competition of that agricultural giant and had preferred to retain English friendship. On the other hand, the agrarians were forced to give the industrialists a free rein to compete with England in commerce and sea power. Another result was to accelerate the transfer of Russia to French capitalists for development and exploitation. At the same time the coalition of the bourgeois and the landed gentry put a check on the liberal tendencies in domestic politics, which the former would have otherwise favored within limits, hardened class lines and placed an embargo on thinking. But when the combination was duly effected, both parties were chained to it, and government by reasoned policy—enlightened, supple, ingenious statecraft—became impossible. No Greek tragedy was ever more exact. Foreign and domestic policies were caught in an iron framework.

In lining up other political factions behind his

big-navy program, von Tirpitz had difficulties. The socialists, of course, were intransigent in their opposition, those "fatherlandless fellows"; they were firmly convinced at the turn of the century that his policy would lead to a competitive struggle among imperialist nations which in turn would end in a crash for all Western civilization—a crash which, as one of them said, would make the Thirty Years' War look like a summer idyl. It happened that the socialists were nearer the truth than any of the official prophets, but in the eyes of the great and wise the former were merely contemptible traitors, out of whose mouths could come nothing good.

Between the industrial-agrarian coalition on the one side and the proletariat on the other stood the Center party, Catholic in religion and astute in politics. Uniting under its banner some big industrialists, a part of the proletariat and many peasants, it cut across class lines. For a long time it hesitated, while negotiations went on among its leaders behind the scenes, but at last, in exchange for power and the spoils of office, the Center went over to von Tirpitz. Meanwhile a correct spiritual formula was found in the language of Winfried Philipp Englert, professor of Catholic Theology in Bonn: "The pure world-state will never come by the liberal or socialist vehicle. Still God's peace will come. . . . It will come, it may be when the world has become one Church, at the end of time. . . . Until then let the German fleet sail on the streams of truth, right and freedom: a convoy for the commodities of German industries, a shield of protection for our co-nationals in foreign lands, a terror to all pirates, tyrants and peace breakers." Beyond that it was impossible for religion to go. The Center party, with good conscience, could now vote for battleships and enjoy the returns from its spiritual coöperation with the Imperial government.

In the spread of "enlightenment," journalists and publicists were easily enlisted. A large number of these birds of passage, circling around in search of fleshpots and lighting places, were easily collected about the Navy Office, nominally independent but actually receiving their rewards from that source. There was no lack of Shearers looking for commissions. So, suddenly the German press broke out with the rash in the late nineties, with the fever of a bigger and better navy. Lest the provincial journalists might be slow in catching the new epidemic, high personalities were sent around the country to "see" key persons in newspaper offices, quite unofficially, of course, and to make permanent "contacts" between the center and the periphery. The Navy made good news, it furnished occasions for patriotic fervor, and it helped to divert the mind of the masses from socialism and social reform. Hence all things worked together for them that had the business in hand. But everything was not left to such Providence. Two newspapers were engineered directly by the armament interests: Stumm's Post and Krupps' Neueste

Nachrichten, and they served as feeders for outlying editors whose knowledge of the sea power and its profits was likely to be deficient.

Finally, there were the teachers and the professors. The former, as cogs in the bureaucratic machine, were quickly subdued to the formula that every patriot must believe in a big navy. That was easy, for conscientious objectors could be ousted and ruined. But professors claimed to be scientific and impartial. How could they sail in the winds of propaganda? The Navy Office found a way by suggesting appropriate subjects for academic research and by supplying statistics for computation and analysis—all calculated to stir up interest in the sea power. If science could go no further than the validity of its "data," scientists were nevertheless human. While the Navy Office refrained from bringing crude pressure to bear on those who held opposition views, it did this as a matter of policy, on the theory that granting freedom in detail was the best method for subduing the collectivity. And the policy worked. Since it was clear that the crowd of wealth and talents was running in the direction of von Tirpitz, most of the professors caught the distemper. And fortunately for him, academicians of the old style, men of honor, refused to take money in exchange for expounding his ideas, thus placing no heavy burden on his propaganda funds. In due time the intellectuals were brought into line.

With the stage all set and the money voted, the navy grew and grew. At last "the" enemy was needed. If one had not been manufactured by the course of events, it would have been necessary to designate one for the purpose of keeping up the furor. Soldiers and sailors become restless when their good weapons rust. So the enemy was discovered on the horizon; it was no mirage; it was England. In the end the gentlemen who worked so hard and so long to build the fleet blew up with their own works, and since that dénouement a number of German people have begun to suspect the omniscience of naval "intelligence."

CHARLES A. BEARD.

October Silence

The days are like gold banners borne
In a steady wind;
Earth turns in oblivion too deep for scorn
Away from the thinned

Nerves, the habituated eyes, the veins
With failing streams.
But in this echoing hush the heart regains
Her minor themes,

Black trees across the suddenly reticent skies,
Corn glazed in the husk,
The slow and patient movement of ox-thighs
In smoky dusk.

H. BONER.

Fifty Years of American Labor

I: *The Test of Material Results*

This is the first of a series of articles on the labor movement in this country. In his second article, which will appear next week, Mr. Hardman analyzes the record of the United Federation of Mine Workers.—THE EDITORS.

"Practically, I've never done a single thing I've wanted in my whole life! I don't know's I've accomplished anything except just get along. I figure out I've made about a quarter of an inch out of a possible hundred rods. . . ."

—George F. Babbitt, in Sinclair Lewis' "Babbitt."

LABOR OMNIA VINCIT—how hollow seems the proud legend inscribed on the emblem of the American Federation of Labor in this year of our Lord 1931. Inevitably it brings to mind the impotence of the whole national labor movement in the present economic crisis. The friends of organized labor despair of its future; but an even more distressing sign of defeat is the complete indifference with which its erstwhile bitter enemies have come to regard the existing labor movement. Our country is perhaps unique in that the movements among its workers evoke neither fear nor enthusiasm.

Twice, in a little over a decade, American labor has faced crises of the utmost magnitude, only to fall back in defeat. In 1917, when the United States entered the World War, labor was virtually made responsible for the national production. It was in the cards of the situation for labor to assume part control of all the industrial processes of the country in wartime. Yet all that the "constituted leaders of labor" asked for was union recognition and the right to collective bargaining. Wage increases barely sufficient to offset the increased living costs were obtained for the factory workers. And this was all that trade unionism exacted at a moment when destiny seemed to offer it supreme power.

How deeply the whole complexion of American industry, politics and culture might have been altered if labor had played a bold hand in that historic situation we can now scarcely imagine. The experience of one industry reveals to us in a small degree, at any rate, what courageous and imaginative leadership might have achieved. The needle industry, long notorious for its chaotic conditions, was, within a short space of time, forced into a far-reaching contractual arrangement that basically changed its nature. This was accomplished through the aggressive and intelligent tactics of the needle trade unions. If such results were won in this extremely unstable area of the industrial scene, one

might easily assume the same tactics carried into all sections of the nation's business and creating an entirely new equilibrium of social power. But all along the domestic front the war crisis only served to expose the intrinsic weakness of the labor movement; since labor did not strike for power, the stage was set for the employers' successful counter-offensives of 1920-1921, leading to the "deflation of labor" and the open shop.

Once more, in the crisis of 1930-1931, opportunity beckoned organized labor, when the collapse of the stock market and the panic throughout industry brought universal confusion. The captains of business, the high priests of prosperity, were dumbfounded by the sudden onrush of the depression. Summoned to President Hoover's conferences at the White House, without formal strings or muzzling conditions, labor was free to make a bid for national leadership. It might have offered a distressed people constructive plans for a controlled industrial economy, for the reorganization of backward industries and, indeed, of all business, to the end of human service rather than of speculation and profiteering. The people waited; two million of them unemployed, five million more increasingly uncertain of their livelihood. William Green raised his voice only in complacent assent. In the name of organized labor he accepted a pact which bound labor but which imposed no obligation upon capital: no strikes, no wage increases, no further demands for recognition of unions. So much for a program; so much for labor leadership.

It has long been clear that labor in this country has not been "power-oriented," and that it has virtually never been out for a quarrel with the capitalist control of society. The post-war leadership of labor stands squarely upon the material and intellectual basis of capitalism. If the late Samuel Gompers occasionally relapsed into moods of social oppositionism, William Green nurtures in his bosom no deep disagreements with the acquisitive mold of our civilization. Indeed, he but recently took occasion to say that labor saw nothing wrong in the dominant economic system. And if, perchance, the current values of the business order do not agree with the spirit of his less luminous associates on labor's front trenches, we are not permitted to know it. Secretary of War Patrick J. Hurley, who was cheered at the Boston convention of the A. F. of L. for many minutes, emphatically declared: "There is no labor organization in the world so patriotically nationalistic as the A. F. of L."

Under the present intellectual orientation of the

movement, material success is god and its delivery-men are his prophets. But the movement has not been materially successful. The economic results of fifty-years' stewardship, as we have known it, are in no sense enough for the deficits incurred. By two essential criteria we may best judge of the immediate success of a movement: the state of organization as defined in terms of numerical strength, cohesiveness and bargaining power; and the workers' earnings as measured by their purchasing power, and when considered in relation to prevailing general levels of prosperity and labor productivity. If social movements of minorities not infrequently find adequate compensations for a temporary material setback in the lessons of defeat and the consequent spiritual enrichment, American trade-union leadership has forfeited its right to such alibi by its tireless insistence on the priority of immediate and material ends over all other ultimate, socially reconstructive aims.

How strong in numbers has the trade-union movement grown to be under the guidance of leaders who have been "betting on capitalism"? According to the report of the Executive Council of the A. F. of L., there were represented at the Boston Convention in October, 1930, 2,961,096 "paid-up or reported" union members organized in 104 national and international unions and in 348 local trade unions directly affiliated with the Federation. The number was less than one percent in excess of the membership in 1929, and substantially the same since 1923. In that year the war-inflated union membership reached the lowest point in post-war decline, having come down from 4,078,740 in 1920 to 2,926,468.

The A. F. of L. has made no progress in membership in the seven years since 1923. Before the War its peak in membership was reached in 1914, with 2,020,671. The positive differential between that year and the present shows a rise of 46 percent in sixteen years. But the reported figure for 1930 was obviously inflated. For instance, the miners' union was credited with "voting strength—4,000," that is, with a membership in excess of 400,000, but Secretary-Treasurer Kennedy of the United Mine Workers, in his semi-annual report for December 1, 1929, showed a paid-up membership of only 156,978 and matters have grown worse since. Again, there appeared in the report the figure, unchanged since 1921: the United Garment Workers' voting strength was rated as 472, indicating a membership of over 47,000. The union has had no such membership. Nor are these two instances the only two in which figures represent wish rather than fact. For reasons that otherwise may be valid, the Executive Council remits a number of frozen dues-accounts of some of its political rotten boroughs. The 46-percent increase in membership since 1914 is at most no better than 25 percent, if that much; and this represents the estimated percentage of increase of the number of wage earners in the country

since 1914. This means that the trade-union movement has made no headway since 1913.

Leo Wolman in a chapter of "Recent Economic Changes" estimated the total membership of American trade unions in 1927, within and outside the A. F. of L., at 3,903,800. He estimated the total number of wage earners in the United States in 1920 as over twenty-six million. If we make allowance for the shrinkage in union membership since 1927 and for the increase of the number of wage earners since 1920, on the basis of Wolman's calculations, the American workers appear to be roughly one-eighth, or 12½-percent organized. The percentage appears somewhat more impressive, namely one-fifth, or 20-percent organized, if we exclude agricultural and clerical labor, clerks, salespeople, salaried employees and laborers at trades or in domestic and personal service—all the fields, in brief, into which the so-called standard unions have scarcely ventured. The number of trade-union members in Great Britain—a country with one-third of our population—is equal to ours. In Germany labor is 35-percent organized.

Coal miners were 37-percent organized in 1910, 55 percent in 1920 and 21 percent in 1930. The International Association of Machinists grew in membership from 57,000 in 1910 to 330,000 in 1920, and then fell to only 78,000 in 1930. The Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers has dwindled to almost complete industrial insignificance, with only a few thousand members. The United Textile Workers, which grew from about 10,000 to over 100,000 in 1920, reported only 30,000 members at the last convention of the A. F. of L. Whatever noticeable growth in trade-union membership occurred—save for the clothing industries, with a gain of 119,000, and the printing and bookbinding trade, with a gain of 54,000—was located chiefly in the building trades, which gained 461,000; in transportation, which gained 393,000; and in theatrical and musicians' unions, which gained 89,000. Increases were noted also in the non-manufacturing industries. "Iron and steel, metals and machinery, food, automobiles and textiles," Leo Wolman wrote in 1927, "are less organized now than they were before or during the War." They are still less organized in 1931. Trade unionism has not grown with basic industry. It has grown away from it.

In the face of gigantic industrial mergers and consolidations, the unions remain but loosely federated, most of them unwilling to coöperate for any common purposes beyond their craft-jurisdiction lines. The much discussed matter of organizing the South has proved that the Federation still remains a "rope of sand." The ill-fated Danville strike of 4,000 textile workers, in which nearly all strikers were union members, showed the hollowness of solemn declarations not backed up by a determination to carry words into effect. The matter of this strike came up before the Boston Convention.

"We feel that the Southern campaign should be

continued with increasing vigor," the Executive Council directed, and the Convention concurred. It was necessary, however, to furnish from five hundred to one thousand dollars a week, for some time, in order to keep the strike in force, but it would seem that the sum of \$10,000 was beyond the "increasing vigor" of the representatives of 3,000,000 trade-unionists; and the "firm resolve" of October was a dead thing by December. Unaided, the United Textile Workers' Union was not able to carry the fight to a successful conclusion. The leaders of the other unions would or could not go beyond talking big words to the press. The strike was lost. The South has been left "open," and on a larger scale than ever before.

Essentially an organization of skilled craftsmen, the American trade-union movement tends unavoidably to thin out as the margin of skill employed in industry diminishes. With labor-saving and automatic machinery playing an ever greater part in production as technology steadily advances, the skilled worker becomes a declining force; the same holds true for the craft unions, unless they join with the unskilled to create an all-inclusive labor-union movement. The reverse is the case. Few international unions carry on organizing work even within their craft jurisdictions. The Federation, whose prime job would seem to be stimulating the organization of the unorganized, is not interested in the business: it is costly and it upsets an established routine of going about other, less hazardous affairs. Labor remains unorganized. The craft unions are constantly becoming weaker within their own craft areas.

The unions which represent about two-thirds of the total membership of the labor movement (2,579,000 out of 3,903,800 in 1927), and which in recent years have shown growth rather than decline, are almost all now facing an unavoidable contraction because of technological changes in their respective industries. The typesetter has made inroads among the newspaper compositors who constitute the most important part of the printing trades. The building trades, sheltered by the non-transportable nature of the product of their work, are confronted with a technology which looks with no friendly eye upon a bricklayer using work methods which are little different from those of the Egyptians under the Pharaohs. Before long it is very likely that building parts will be shipped from manufacturing centers to assembling places. This proposed new process is past the experimental stage. Architects have been speaking out audibly and with persistence against an obsolete building technique, and it is presumable that competition will do the rest.

The transportation industry has been the largest and most promising part of the activist section of the movement; but here, too, there is danger ahead. Between December, 1929, and December, 1930, the number of employees on Class I steam railroads

in the United States, according to the Bureau of Statistics of the Interstate Commerce Commission, was reduced by 248,527; that is, about 20 percent. "Theatres and music" was the next successful trade-union group in 1927; but those were the blissful days when movies were silent and artless noisemaking and canned music were not called talkies. Room for further growth is facing shrinkage under the impact of machine work. In the needle trades also, mechanization appears and spreads consternation.

But if the dominant policy of American trade unionism has been barren of results so far as organization is concerned, may it not be given a clean bill of health on the grounds of an increase in real earnings won by the unions for millions of American wage earners? This claim has been made often and insistently.

Paul H. Douglas, in his monumental work, "Real Wages in the United States: 1890-1926," estimates that the American working class has increased its purchasing power 55 percent during the period surveyed. The situation remained substantially unchanged through 1927-1928, down to the depression of 1929. In the decade prior to 1890 the trade-union movement was not sufficiently important to bring about any appreciable change in the wage levels and hour schedules of the country as a whole. The Douglas analysis of the issue may thus be taken as fairly accurate for the whole length of life of the trade-union movement under federated leadership. However, Douglas credits from 7 to 8 percent of the increase in real earnings to the greater volume of available employment, of which but a very small measure may have resulted from a progressive shortening of the length of the working day, attributable to organized trade-union effort. He assesses at another 5 percent the "value" of the decreased number of dependents of the average worker in the course of thirty-six years, which is probably due in part to the decline of the birth rate in workers' families, and in part to the entrance of girls and married women into industry and the clerical occupations. Still another part of the 55-percent increase in real wages is made up by the augmentation of the various free government services, and of the welfare efforts of benevolent employers and private philanthropies. The actual increase of the purchasing power of labor's earnings in the last half-century amounts to 35 percent and it falls far below the growth of the American per-capita income for the same period.

Computations made by the National Industrial Conference Board on the basis of available figures covering the period of fifteen years from 1914 to 1929, and expressed in 1913 dollars, show an increase of the total national income by 59.2 percent, as compared with labor's gain of 35 percent. A conservative estimate of the growth of the national income for the thirty-six years studied by Douglas will give labor at most but one-half of the

growth as compared to the nation as a whole. Facts do not bear out the hopeful claims of labor's leaders.

How much of the increase in labor's real earnings may be attributable to the influence of trade unionism? Douglas has attempted to put to a test the generally accepted idea that workers owe the improvement in their position to trade-union organization and the bargaining power that organization can muster. His tentative conclusion, on the basis of only circumstantial evidence, is that "the chief cause for the increase in real wages has been the general increase in productivity," and that unionism had played only a secondary role in the maintenance of wage levels in the depression of 1921. "The threat of unionism may well have served to maintain money rates of wages during 1921," he observes. An analysis recently made by Ethelbert Stewart, United States Commissioner of Labor Statistics, of the ratio of value of production to wages and their purchasing power, indicates that wage increases lag behind growth of productivity. It appears from Mr. Stewart's computations that, "comparing the twenty-year period between 1909 and 1929, the average yearly earnings in the manufacturing industries had increased 154.4 percent, the value of product per wage earner had increased 156.2 percent, the value added by manufacture per wage earner had increased 182.2 percent, the percent wages are of value of product had fallen six-

tenths of one percent, while the percent wages are of value of product added had fallen 10 percent."

The point Douglas makes—that wage increases were due to increased labor productivity rather than to union pressure—does not seem invulnerable. Increased labor productivity is not likely to cause wage increases automatically, except in a small degree, through a resultant downward movement of commodity prices. Without union intervention, wage increases will not come. In fact, it all works quite the other way. Whether attained by direct union pressure or "voluntarily granted" by employers who fear probable unionization, high wages tend to affect productivity by stimulating management reforms, which cut waste and increase output through the use of improved machinery. It may be safely said that the lack of vitality and aggressiveness in the major body of organized labor, and consequently the abundant supply of cheap labor and long work hours, have retarded the rationalization of large sections of our national industries. And whichever way the rise of labor's real earnings in the last several decades may be interpreted, it has been slow and sluggish. But if the leaders of the movement cannot lay serious claims to being the authors of material improvement in a country as rich and growing as ours, neither can they show that they have built up impressive power reserves for a frontal attack on the social order. What, then, have they done but "just get along?"

J. B. S. HARDMAN.

Rimbaud: the Flight from Literature

THE "REVIVAL" of Jean-Arthur Rimbaud, and the modern cult of him as a poet and an oracle, has all the air of one of those celebrated cases which, like the rescue of Blake or Melville from Limbo, periodically dislocates the history of letters. After fifty years of the Rimbaud legend—it has flourished more magnificently than ever in the post-war decade—new aspects of interest emerge for us continually, as scholars piece together, like some beautiful ruined statuary, his singular history.

Genius of poetry that he undoubtedly was, the most beautiful and enigmatic thing of all Rimbaud did was certainly his own life. It has the aspects of profound interior drama and extravagant physical adventure. He was precocious; for two or three years, after the age of sixteen, he wrote verses and prose stamped with greatness. Yet at nineteen he abandoned literature for good and all; he also put behind him completely European civilization itself, to embark upon fabulous adventures in the Orient and lose himself in its more primitive life currents. That he was fully aware of all his own powers and of the meaning of every step he

took—such as the attempted destruction of his manuscripts—makes his case all the more haunting. His life has a dreadful beauty. Because he "struggled in vain to escape a Voice that solicited him," as Paul Claudel says? Or is it as some "terrible messenger," as a figure of absolute revolt against the culture of the Western world that he troubles and looms over us?

His own sparse writings, little known during his violent and brief artistic career, seem to prophesy and record his personal fate. Beyond the immediate brilliance of device and literary effect, his work has the refulgence of his strange destiny as a seeker of the "primitive," as a kind of superman—so the French have always believed—contemporary to the still unknown Nietzsche. The fantastic and sonorous lines of "The Drunken Boat," the hallucinations of his "Nigger Book," the spiritual drama of a Lucifer in his "Season in Hell" (1873), which was his last testament to posterity—all this is a consistent and inconceivably bitter repudiation of his age, an age outwardly mercenary and spiritually defeated; and all of it exercises a perpetual invitation to uneasy little men of letters to abandon their hollow

arts and advance with Rimbaud into the unknown, the nameless and the vertiginous.

Yet his writings, which he himself spurned, seem also to beckon one back, reviving, illuminating, as one disciple declares, "all the ways of art, of religion and life." There are even interpreters who have identified an "expansive" mystical religion, like the faith of the Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Gita, in the cabalistic fragments of the "Season in Hell." One feels incompetent to follow these obscure intimations. But what is clear is that there was expressed in Rimbaud at one stage a religion of art, a religion of pure literature. He himself, after long vigils, was to learn something that made him curse art and flee it; but he left certain secrets or clues which men seized upon, under the temptation to become alchemists in their turn.

Paul Valéry, in writing on the French Symbolists of the late nineteenth century, speaks of the high aspirations of this literary school, of its painful search for pure forms, determined by musical unity, and even for a kind of "universal language of ideas," presented through images or symbols. But, he concludes, a too rarefied zone had been reached, an air "too pure" and unbreathable, from which retreat was inevitable. Had not Rimbaud foreseen all this? He was, of course, the precursor of all the modern literary movements which have been variously called "symbolist" or "abstract" or "experimental." Elsewhere Valéry observes: "We have all been feeding upon Rimbaud, these forty years."

The modern literary movements are indeed all directly traceable to Poe, who in the "Eureka" seemed to be groping toward the realization of a "universal symmetry" present in his mind, through his "poetic instinct." His literature, instead of being merely "representative," was peopled with the figures or the symbols of his imagination. Now Baudelaire, who felt that Poe had anticipated all of his ideas, became his inspired translator; Baudelaire in turn, by poems and translations, had a decisive effect upon Rimbaud. So that when young American poets, exposed to French literature, now absorb Rimbaud's influence directly, or even at second or third hand, they still remain within the orbit of an American tradition.

An early letter of 1871, called the "letter of the Seer," reveals his theories and plans which were soon to be fulfilled in "The Drunken Boat" and in the "Illuminations." He speaks to his friend of his scorn for the contemporary literary schools, mediocre second generation of romantics. The poet must refuse the way of compromise and imitation; casting off his false education, he must turn barbarous, become again "the Stealer of Fire."

"*Je est un autre*," he writes; which may be translated: "The I is another self." One part of the poet, the I, gives himself up to the vigilant study of the other self. "He searches for his soul, inspects it, tests it, knows it." He is present at "the

unfolding of his own thought"; hangs upon it, poised; gives a stroke of his baton, and lo, the full orchestra sounds for him. But this mastery, this "cultivation of the self," must become something dangerous. He says: "It is a question of making the soul monstrous in the manner of the *comprachicoes*, eh?" For, had not the gipsies learned the art of deforming children's faces that they might be picturesque, comic or magnificent in manhood! Well, Rimbaud, for his part, would even implant warts upon his visage, to deform it. "*I say that you must be a Seer—make yourself a Seer!*"

The distortion of the physiognomy is but a sign of the alteration of the soul that was desired. (Anything to escape from the soul which the age and the environment molded!) The poet became a Seer, he continues, "by a long, immense and deliberate *disordering* of all his senses. He seeks all forms of love, of suffering, of madness. . . . He uses all poisons on himself, keeping only the quintessences of them. Ineffable torture, for which all his faith is needed, all his superhuman strength, and in the course of which he comes to stand forth as the great invalid, the great criminal, the great accursed one—and the supreme savant!—for he arrives at the *unknown!*—since he has cultivated his soul, already richer than all others."

The formula of genius, as it came to Rimbaud so early in life, implied the fierce, single-minded development of the self at all costs; it implied, above all, the abandonment of known landmarks. Life was to be a perpetual inventing of new experiences, an eternal exploration, a supreme trial of the soul. Such an anarchic doctrine invites the strong soul to run extreme dangers; but it may become sinister or deadly in the hands of the weak whose worldly experiments are not dictated by intellectual boldness. For these, the preoccupation with self and with the senses does literally become a stunting deformation; it becomes simply a game of "madder music and stronger wine," an obsession with death, rather than life. We think of poor Verlaine, whom Rimbaud sardonically promised to restore to his "original state as a child of the sun"; we think of the various lyricists of the *fin de siècle*, French and English, who expired in the gutter; we think of various suicides—even the lurid end of a recent American poet—and perceive the danger of Rimbaud's message. Rimbaud, in 1871, in an era of disastrous war and frustrated revolution, was, like so many others, aware of the absolute necessity of divorcing himself from contemporary values. His convictions were negative, one might say: the more absolute his escape from the world about him, the more firmly ensured were his visions. He tried, as if by a great wager, to bring about some "monstrous" change in himself, so that he might once more extend human expression and human values. (One remembers that he was for a moment one of the *communards* of '71; he was an infidel of the Church, a rebel against his mother and society.) But he was quite alone, with his

visions, like Blake; he had no common currency of speech that might bring him the companionship of his fellows.

"The poet comes to the *unknown*," his letter continues; "and when maddened, he ends by losing all understanding of his visions, still he has seen them, hasn't he? Let him burst with his palpitations—with the unheard of, nameless things he has seen. Then let other horrible workers come after him; they will begin at the horizons where he expired!"

It is as if in his absolute revolt the poet turns to Nature, "pure and free," augments, sharpens, all his senses, seeking at one stroke to penetrate universal mysteries. That Rimbaud had taken the path of the mystic we perceive from the closing lines of his letter which refer to the "language" of the future poet. "*All language being idea*," he ends, "the day of the universal language will come."

Baudelaire, too, had taken this path of the mysticism of poetry; Baudelaire, whom Rimbaud termed "the first of the seers, king of poets, a real god," had suggested garnering the occult symbols of the Universal. In his mysterious sonnet, "Correspondences," the elder poet had called Nature a "temple of living columns," "a forest of symbols, through which man passed, observing and observed, listening to the long echoes that mingled always in a profound and shadowy unity, to the perfumes, colors and sounds replying to each other." . . . Rimbaud, too, would find his medium in the forest of symbols. He declares almost in identical words: "This language, the *new* or *universal*, will speak from soul to soul, summing up all perfumes, sounds, colors, linking together all thought."

By "symbolism" in Rimbaud, one means not the parable or allegory of a Maeterlinck, but that technique which transforms or sublimates the material of life, using symbols of it, rather than its substance. He attempted by a formula—if I may define it in another way—that poetic magic, that blended music of image and tone which Coleridge, in "Kubla Khan," achieved by opiates! But this is only an instance of the extreme consciousness with which the French at their best approach literature. For the young Rimbaud literature was virtually a means of overcoming life. "Poetry will not rhythm action," he wrote; "it will go in advance of it. . . . In the meantime, we must demand of the poet the *new*—in ideas and forms."

All theories have a way of seeming in the end to be but answers to the artist's own temperament. Though Rimbaud's were to be fecund, it is difficult to say whether it is the new qualities of his music or the insolent pride and destructiveness of his moral attitude which were to appeal most strongly to posterity.

The "alchemist of the word," as he liked to style himself in youth, was committed to experiments of all sorts. One can scarcely explain what a full bag of tricks he seemed to have, and with what gayety

he played them. He was one of the first to employ distortions and dissociations systematically. He used verbs, instead of adjectives, to lend violence to his page; he used adjectives chiefly to summon up precise colors; he sought a great variety of meters: ranging from that of the quick, nervous lyric to that of pompous oration; and where Hugo had freed the Alexandrine from the *caesura*, he broke from regular meter to experiment with free verse. (His prose is really free verse, of the most precise intervals, having nothing in common with that mongrel product, "prose poetry.") He would use now the tones of direct vulgar speech, or now drawing upon technical language, similes suggestive of laboratories, even of the magnifying motion picture, which of course did not exist in his time. And significantly he would use repetition or "recapitulation," of phrases or images, in the way of a sonata or a symphony, scorning the sequence of common-sense, informative literature, as no one had dared before him. "His form was musical," Claudel observes.

To be sure, these innovations were in the air. Rimbaud seized upon them, exploited them in the extreme degree. When he had left, literature was full of a dangerous confusion. Rimbaud's very *tours de force*, his excesses, were to create traditions for the too-cultured people whom he detested. But his motives were entirely different from theirs of playing the polite parlor game of literature.

The poems that he wrote, it has been said, are largely visions, revolts, valedictions. In the prose and verse of the "Illuminations," there is continuous, oblique reference to his life drama; there are also premonitions that we begin to understand now of colossal machines, industrialized chimeras and unthinkable wars. These poems, though Rimbaud scorned them at the last, are at the farthest remove from literary exercises.

The very intensity, the very primitive violence of his writing, at this stage (1871-1873) seem to forecast his early exile from letters. The livid beauty of "The Drunken Boat," whose careenings in unknown seas prophesy his own course, that of the orphic "Illuminations," is not to be found in the emulative devotees of literature; it is the fruit of Rimbaud's deliberate disordering of his senses, of his effort to bring a "monstrous" change upon himself, and of his submission to overpowering visions. He himself explains mockingly in the autobiographical "Season in Hell" how he would dream "crusades, voyages, republics without histories, dislodgments of continents," believing in "all the spells of magic"; how, playing with the "inexpressible," with the vertiginous, he sought still to control the color, the form, the movement of each continent. "I flattered myself that, by means of instinctive rhythms, I had invented a new poetic language which would one day be accessible to all the senses. I reserved all rights of translation. . . ."

It was his fate to go on to adventures beyond

literature; and after the deceptions, the scandals that had befallen him, his own pride, his own revulsions forbade him to turn back. Done with writing, there seemed nothing in Europe that could hold him. "Science does not move fast enough." Dropping old "sophistries," the Alchemy of the Word, the Magic Study of Happiness, he goes to expire "by the banks of barbarous rivers."

His last writing was the "Season in Hell," designed not as a work of art, but as the testament of a unique religious struggle from which he emerged apparently without church and without hope. He breathes a lasting hatred of Christianity. "No more hymns! Hold all gains!" he cries at the end.

For all its cryptic and dissociated style, the "Season in Hell" indicates to us clearly that Rimbaud regrets finally having "fed himself with lies." It is as if "he confined whole careers within himself," Jacques Rivière commented. Cycles of art are rapidly compressed within two or three years of his life, and seem to forecast all that will come to those who follow him—the retreat from "unbreathable" zones! Indeed, literature ever since Rimbaud has been engaged in the struggle to circumvent him. In the first place he makes poetry too dangerous. And in the end he exhorts us to abandon it. For then he knew how to honor beauty. "By running away." His example and his appeal for us is endlessly disturbing. No answer may be made; save perhaps at the end of a life which, by most of us, is to be known and plumbed far more slowly. And shall we dare to "begin at the horizons where he expired"?

He turns himself toward the East. "I see that my unhappiness comes from not having realized soon enough that we are in the Occident. The Occidental swamps!" With the artist in him effaced, he goes to lose his identity, beyond the tropical seas, in the African deserts, among the tides of black men. Yet he seems incredulous, even departing for the Orient, as if doubting at bottom the wisdom and purity of the ancient races.

One suspects that Rimbaud, having sung all songs, having exhausted all the esthetic poisons of Europe, quit the civilization of white men with immense hopes of some sort of self-renewal. But on this adventure, in the East and in Africa, the whole second half of his life, he is forever enigmatic. Did he see something of that which he used to conjure up out of school atlases? Did he become truly a "child of the sun" as he led caravans across the desert? Or should we mind only his intermittent cries of pain, at inhuman suffering, at the defeat of flesh and bone, and his incredible, final reversion to inherited character? The tragic last act, which resembles that of no other play one has read, seems to leave for each one his own lesson. Most of us might not have followed Rimbaud; nor would we have changed anything in him, if we could.

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON.

Washington Notes

Taking Hoover Behind the Barn—Fun on the Farm Board—The Ogre of Congress—Limbering up the Heavies

IN THE next session of Congress there will be plenty of large and shining targets for the anti-administration sharpshooters. Rarely have I known the White House opposition to have a greater variety of things to shoot at—or more ammunition. Also the splendid opportunities for practice since the Hoover administration began have developed among Democrats and progressives some extraordinarily fine marksmen, capable of hitting the bull's-eye with gratifying frequency and at long range.

To this it should be added that few administrations have been more helpless under attack. Considering what has happened along the political battle front during the last two years, appreciating the present political situation and noting that the coming session of Congress immediately precedes the opening of the presidential campaign, it takes no special clairvoyant gifts to foresee that from start to finish the session will be marked by a series of ferocious assaults upon Mr. Hoover and his administration—a congressional lacing that will make all previous assaults seem gentle, playful and refined.

Through the long recess Democratic and progressive Senators for the most part have been unable to let themselves go effectively. The moratorium gesture was so clearly of a nonpolitical nature and the issues involved in reparations and war-debt suspension were so vital and large, that partisan criticism was adjourned by general consent. In the main, it will continue adjourned until December, one reason being that so far as senatorial publicity for attack is concerned, administration critics are at a disadvantage with the Senate not in session.

There are on the administration front so many vulnerable spots that the barrage will cover a wide range. The indications, however, are strong that the fiercest attack will be on the Federal Farm Board, its policies, performances and personnel, its past, present and future. Of all the agencies, organizations, boards, committees and commissions connected directly or indirectly with this administration, I think that beyond question the Farm Board is the one most outstandingly unpopular. It has the distinction of having aroused more animosities and created more bitterness and given less satisfaction than any other body. If it has friends, they are largely inarticulate. If it has improved agricultural conditions anywhere in any way, it has escaped notice. If there is an effective or reasonable defense for its major proposals, the defense has not been offered either by the Board itself or by the White House. Actually, the President has in one instance taken pains to dissociate himself from Farm Board action, and the Board has more than once backtracked, sidestepped and disowned its own policies.

It is obvious to almost anyone that there are excellent chances that not only the Farm Board itself, but the law under which it operates, will be torn to pieces before the session is over. The anti-administration forces are not alone arrayed in opposition; actually some of the most regular of

the regulars are exceedingly antagonistic to this pet project of the President's, the instrument by which, it is tragically pathetic to recite, he intended to restore the health of agriculture and make the farmers permanently prosperous.

The most surprising of these regular Republicans who have developed hostility to the Board, of course, is Senator David A. Reed of Pennsylvania, the Mellon mouth-piece in the Senate and usually a staunch administration wheel horse. Angered by certain Farm Board activities affecting his state, Mr. Reed, who is a curiously conceited statesman, not long ago burst forth in denunciation of the Board, pledging himself to introduce a bill repealing the law under which it operates, winding up its affairs and wiping it out of existence. So bitter is the feeling that I am not sure this proposal of the angry Mr. Reed will not get through the Senate, though I doubt if it will get beyond that body.

The trouble is that there is no clarity of thought among them as to what they really do want, and that, it may be said in passing, has always been the trouble with the agricultural representatives in and out of Congress. The farm organizations and professional propagandists are mostly unfriendly to the Board and have no confidence in its wisdom, purposes or policies. The agitation to clean the slate and start again with new legislation is under way. One element is strongly in favor of the old equalization-fee idea, so ardently advocated in 1928 by Lowden, Dawes, Watson, Capper, McNary and others. Another group, foremost among whom is Borah of Idaho, can see nothing to save the situation except the debenture plan. To this the Democrats in Senate and House are fairly well committed, nearly all of them having voted for it in 1929.

To both equalization fee and debenture plan, however, Mr. Hoover and the forces behind him, which include nearly all the great metropolitan newspapers and all the Eastern banking and business interests, are irrevocably opposed. Without question he will veto any bill containing either of these features. Considering the situation from whatever angle you choose, the outlook is depressing indeed to those with a real interest in and understanding of the extremely acute and deeply depressing agricultural situation.

With the existing law a conceded failure, there remains such a lack of unity among the farming organizations, interests and representatives that the enactment of any well considered program in 1932 seems practically impossible. There will be a tremendous assault on the Farm Board. It will be riddled with invective, shot to pieces on the Senate floor, but left at the close of the session to pick itself up and go its crippled, futile way as best it can. There are two reasons for saying that nothing will be done about the Farm Board except shoot it full of holes. One is that the lack of a real functioning majority by either side in either branch of the next Congress makes confusion inevitable and affirmative action on a big controversial question almost impossible. The other is that we will be then on the very threshold of a presidential campaign. Under such circumstances and at such a time only the very foolish and inexperienced will expect affirmative action from Congress on any issue of importance.

T. R. B.

Washington.

The Shadow of Wings

The House of Connelly, by Paul Green. Martin Beck Theatre, September 28, 1931.

WE ALL in our youth must have wondered as to how it was that sinners and side-steppers by the hundreds escape the world's censure or notice, while such as Guenevere, Héloïse, Francesca or Macbeth or Othello go on forever, remembered and weighed, loved, hated, wept over and punished. We see later that it is because they are worth the trouble, include some scope of human nature, that those who forget are forgotten, that, in sum, wings cast shadows. For this reason it is a high compliment to say that the Group Theatre, with their production of Paul Green's play, invite of us all real criticism and concern.

The simple information about the Group Theatre is that for some years its organization, or dream at least, has been under way; that in it are a number of players who might prosper in the obvious commercial sense; that part of its present state is due to the assistance of the Theatre Guild, from whom come some of the members, some financial support, the play, which was the Guild's property, and the sponsoring of this first production, after the close of which the connection between the Theatre Guild and the Group Theatre stops. The Group Theatre announces a plan for other plays, in something of a repertory system, and expresses the hope of developing, through a variety of roles and casting and through working together, a company of actors.

In this first production by the Group Theatre we have a play that the dramatist could not quite write and the players could not quite act. The choice, nevertheless, is a good one. The play provides a sincere vehicle, full of well defined acting parts; it has less mere facility, a more profound source, more richness in texture and scope in emotion, than most plays that could have been available. This honesty and serious intention in the choice of a play was prophetic of the general character of the whole event. There was not an instance of stage cheating for effect, or of hollowness; there was no forcing, no individual grabbing of the scene; you felt the play free of tampering or intrusion. The promise that lies in such an attitude is obvious; the very genuine welcome given to the Group's first venture rested basically on that.

The story of "The House of Connelly" happens in 1905, and turns on the fortunes of an old place where for a hundred and fifty years the Connelly family has lived, in all its pride, its dwindling fortunes, its fading blood. One of the tenants has a daughter, Patsy, who is ambitious for land. She entangles the willless young head of the house, he falls in love with her, she finally is in love with him. The household consists of the old mother, two unmarried sisters and an uncle. The uncle, whose broken-down lusts and knowledge of where the family is drifting teach him some degree of common wisdom, advises the young heir to marry this girl and let her help him get the plantation on its feet. The three women of the family oppose the whole idea of marriage with poor whites. There is a young lady visitor from Charleston, but the match with Will does not come off. In the end the uncle shoots himself, the mother dies,

Will and Patsy marry, and, before the return of the wedding party, the two sisters, the younger compelled to it by the older, leave the old house forever. New blood has come into the Connelly stock, the land will live again.

This short outline is necessarily a mere travesty on a play whose best virtues lie not in the story but in the characters and the lines they are given to speak. The characters in Mr. Green's play are clearly defined; their words—all but the heroine's—are profoundly Southern and have been well heard by the dramatist out of his own Southern life. Sometimes a detail though tiny is so startlingly Southern that none but a Southerner could savor its exactness. I will take but one instance, that where the older sister, speaking of how they had tried to do their part by their brother and of their many efforts, says, "We talked to him." You must be born in the midst of the Southern training, where young ladies are taught what is their duty toward the men in the family, and the habit of "entertaining" someone is to be early acquired, if you are to know how perfect that touch remains.

The weakness of "The House of Connelly" lies in the girl motive. There is tied up in this tenant's daughter the theme of the new life blending with the old, the new conditions, the strengthened blood turning back to the land, and so on. But this, though it is so large a motive in the drama, never gets quite expressed. Throughout the play time is lost in other talk and other scenes when what we need is to get the main theme established. What has seemed to us the old love story of beggar maid and prince turns out eventually to be the deep-laid scheme of a young woman who, with her eye on possessing the land, has seduced a weak, intense young man, and at last grown to love him. All this crucial matter is poured out in an explanatory speech, at the crisis of their relations, smothered in emotion, and written like some college girl's explanation, arid and without the engaging passion or reality that so many of the other characters' lines have had. The trouble is that at bottom no dramatic image is ever discovered, no action or moment that would create for us the girl's meaning and point in the play.

The uncle's role, rather too long for the sting and pathos intended by it, runs somewhat too far toward the Russian flavor; and his suicide seems to me unconvincing, as well as being both untrue to this Southern type or temperament and harmful to the play's total impression on the memory. "The House of Connelly" remains, notwithstanding, well worth a dozen more facile works. Uncle, girl, problem or no, it is at its source poetic, by which I means the richness, quiver and dilation that it often gives to the material presented.

Of the settings that Mr. Cleon Throckmorton has done, the first is no better and no worse than the usual mess we get when an outdoor scene must be realistic: one way to put it is to say that this setting is on the plane where we actually resent the girl's picking poke-berries off dried oak bushes—a trivial state of mind indeed. The garden scene will do. The third scene, of the dining-room in the old house, is beautiful and is right in its blend of reality and unreality. Of all this season's settings that I have seen it is the one most genuinely dramatic to the play it serves.

The directing of the play, by Harold Clurman, Cheryl

Crawford and Lee Strasberg, is, in the earlier scenes especially and sometimes elsewhere, too slow. In its management of the actors as persons, individuals, and in the scenes where the action moves forward and the interest tightens, it is admirable.

This brings us to a problem very pressing and delicate when a play with Southern characters is to be produced: the extent to which the actors shall attempt the Southern accent. In the first place there is no one Southern accent any more than there is one British accent, but scores, depending on the section, the social class, the person speaking, and so forth. In the second place few actors not Southern can catch the right effect. It was to some extent a good decision, then, that led the Group players away from this attempt in their speech (though Mr. Tone in his first scene, however, he may have reverted afterward, caught the right placement in the throat, the right voice and rhythm very well indeed, without travesty and to the furtherance of his effect). Clearly the general intention of the directors was to present the play on its universal side, the story as it might happen anywhere; and this, in so far as concerns the main themes and straight movements of the scenes, was also a wise decision. It is also true that where the acting can really search out the depths of the emotions and character portrayed by a good dramatist, mere surface qualities are easily dispensed with and forgotten.

There remains the fact, however, that much of Mr. Green's play is very Southern indeed, double-dyed Southern; and in the light of this the problem is less easily shelved. Disregarding the matter of the speech, we have left the vividness, animation, responsiveness, whatever you please to call it, that is Southern and that must underlie these characters; who may, in turn, once that is gotten, be as universal as you like. In the later scenes, where more action and plot appears, I felt less the lack of both surface and vividness; but in the earlier scenes, where an atmosphere was to be established (not necessarily a Southern atmosphere but the dramatic atmosphere intended by the author) the whole impression seemed to me very poor. In the Christmas-supper scene, most of all, I felt as a theatre critic that the scene was moving and right for the first moment, when the sisters in silence were setting the table; from that point on I felt no flow between the people present; only Mr. Tone and Miss Adler seemed to me to get anything beyond the obvious. As a Southerner, with the flow and poignancy in the scene failing me, so that it did not breathe with universal human life, I felt myself unbelievably exasperated at the lack of all Southern quality externally and emotionally. And one more point: if we seek independence of the play's Southern locale, do we further the argument or the universal by bringing in colored actors, and such glowing ones at that as the two Southern mammies, Miss Fanny de Knight and Miss Rose McClendon?

Among the players the sincere intention and right spirit was almost equally apparent. Mr. Morris Carnovsky as the uncle gave a performance that was technically very careful and sincere but was neither pathetic nor aristocratic, both essential to his drama; I can only say that the better it got the worse it was. Mr. Franchot Tone as the young Connelly achieved the whole pathos and range of a finely

written part, with all its young moods, its tortured, confused loyalties and its power to feel. The depth of such a performance as this of Mr. Tone's must not blind us to its remarkable accuracy also, at every point. Miss Stella Adler, as the elder of the two sisters, had great feeling and great purity of movement and style. She understood perfectly the character, with all its *amour propre*, fought-down and secret hunger, distinction and passionate pride. I have never seen a better case of how inner quality and rightness of line can free and complete a piece of acting.

STARK YOUNG.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Conference on Social and Economic Changes

SIR: Your readers will be interested in the coming Conference on Social and Economic Changes: How Is the College Meeting Them and Their Effect Upon Man and Woman in the Marriage Relation—Research in Family Life. These and other topics will be discussed at a two-day conference to be held under the auspices of the Child Study Association of America in New York City, on October 19 and 20. The session on Research will open the conference at the Hotel Pennsylvania, on October 19, at 10 A. M., and the program will continue on October 20 at the headquarters of the Child Study Association, 221 West Fifty-seventh Street.

Seventy organizations, including social, welfare and those carrying on programs in parent education, are coöperating with the Child Study Association, forty-four of which will have exhibits at the Hotel Pennsylvania during the conference.

We will be glad to send anyone a detailed program upon request.

MRS. CORA FLUSSER,
Publicity Director.

New York City.

From Civilization to Harlan

SIR: Your readers will be interested in learning that a group of well known writers has volunteered to go to Harlan, Kentucky, to help break down the gunman wall of silence in the coal strike.

The National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, including Theodore Dreiser, Lincoln Steffens, Harry Elmer Barnes, Malcolm Cowley, Edna St. Vincent Millay and many others, is giving the writers' group a farewell dinner on October 9, 7 P. M., at Teutonia Hall, Sixteenth Street and Third Avenue, New York City, \$1.50 per plate. Reservations at Civic Club, 18 East Tenth Street.

Among the speakers at this dinner will be Jessie Wakefield, International Labor Defense representative, and Arnold Johnson, American Civil Liberties Union investigator, both of whom spent six weeks in the Harlan County Jail on charges of "Criminal Syndicalism."

New York City.

WALTER WILSON, Secretary.

Dr. France and the Debts

SIR: In one respect it is regrettable that the presidential candidacy of former Senator France of Maryland is not attracting general attention. Dr. France advocates sweeping reductions, if not complete cancellation, of German reparation and Allied war debts. If some of our powerful political leaders had taken a similar position ten years ago, the world probably would now be in a much pleasanter situation.

Next to the former Kaiser, probably Calvin Coolidge is the man chiefly responsible for Germany's financial and political

troubles. When Mr. Coolidge became President on the death of President Harding in 1923, he had an excellent opportunity to lead America and the rest of the world away from grasping harshness toward generosity and reconciliation. But instead of pleading for genuine generosity, he insisted on Allied payments to America and he was deaf to all proposals for really moderate treatment of Germany. He preached always the doctrine that international obligations should be lived up to. He never admitted the possibility that the obligations imposed upon Germany were unjust, or that the American attitude toward the Allies was essentially narrow and selfish. Of course, even now, an end to our madness and smugness about reparations and war debts is possible. President Hoover's moratorium movement may bring sanity. But action now cannot be voluntary. We are in the position of being forced to reduce our demands. We have lost much time, and the world has proceeded far toward further misery and strife and destruction as a result of the stern morality of Calvin Coolidge.

MYRON M. JOHNSON.

Worcester, Mass.

Frank Harris

SIR: I am writing a book, in collaboration with Dr. A. I. Tobin, on the late Frank Harris. We are anxious to procure assistance from those who have material dealing with him: letters, stories, impressions, anything that might be of interest to those studying his colorful personality. We should appreciate any assistance that readers of The New Republic may be able to give us, and every manuscript or document lent to us will receive religious care. I may be addressed at 5501 Washington Boulevard, Chicago, Ill., and Dr. Tobin at 292 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y.

ELMER GERTZ.

Chicago, Ill.

There's One Good Prison!

SIR: When, and if, the prison authorities in our various states take the Wickersham Report seriously and try to improve our penal institutions, they will naturally want to see the best examples that the world affords. One of these, at least, is in the last place we would probably look for advanced ideas in prison construction and management—Cuba.

Morro Castle and Cabañas have reputations that date back several centuries and that smell to heaven. There were gruesome tales about them last spring in connection with the present political disturbances. Yet the latest Cuban prison, the *Presidio Modelo*, or model prison, on the Isle of Pines, is probably the finest in the world both as to buildings and the treatment of prisoners.

The buildings are new, built largely of native marble obtained from a quarry on the prison grounds, and are light, well ventilated, better planned and more sanitary than many of the inmates' homes. Most of the prison buildings are round, with ninety-three cells on each floor, and there are five tiers, each with a balcony overlooking a large central arena. The cells are pie-shaped; the narrow end is six or seven feet wide and there are ample windows at the large end. Each cell has a cot that folds up against the wall, a wash basin with hot and cold water and a toilet. There are no doors and consequently no locks, and we saw no guards inside the grounds except trustees. Our guides were serving terms for homicide.

The prison grounds are surrounded by a low wall, minus the usual sentry boxes which seem to have originated in Spain, and only a few soldiers, or *rurales*, were seen outside the walls. The question of guards is largely influenced by the fact that the prison is on a comparatively small island and by the drastic but apparently effective custom of shooting an escaped prisoner on sight. Neither surrender nor alibi is accepted, and few try to escape.

Splendidly kept farms supply food. The pigpens are the cleanest I have ever seen. There is a large bakery and the bread is excellent; we sampled it. A shoe shop and a tailor shop furnish footwear and clothes. There were about 3,500 inmates, and the absence of locked doors and guards, except of course for the

violent or insane prisoners, was very noticeable. The prison has a good hospital which is, incidentally, the only one on the island. No one interested in modern prisons should fail to visit the Presidio Modelo.

New York City.

FRED H. COLVIN.

The Marion Convictions

SIR: It has been two years since the Marion strike which ended so disastrously for the workers, but even yet the workers are suffering persecution from the courts because of their strike activity. We have formed a Defense Committee in Marion to try to help the families of those who have just been given sentences by the court. Since we are living on a small wage, we are appealing to our friends to help us.

At the June term of court Leon Moore, nineteen years old, was given a sentence of five to seven years for dynamiting a house during the strike. He had no lawyer, so the judge appointed one who did nothing to defend the boy. Two other boys, George Styles and Bob Perkins, were given a year on the road for the same charge of dynamiting. In none of these cases was any evidence of their guilt brought out. In one of the three cases a man who spends most of his time in prison was brought from the jail to testify against the boys. On his evidence the boy was convicted. We want to get all three paroled, and in addition we want to make provisions for the families while the men are serving their terms.

Moore has no dependents, but we need money to obtain help in getting him out. Perkins has three small children, Styles has two. His wife has been blacklisted. The children are crying for bread. To take care of the families and get the boys paroled we must have \$350. We realize that this is a bad time to ask people for money, but we believe there are people who can spare a small amount to help these men and their families against whom the laws of the state have worked such injustice. People like A. J. Muste, Tom Tippet, Louise McLaren and others who know the situation have endorsed this appeal. Please send contributions to Marion Defense Committee, care of Lawrence Hogan, Box 574, Marion, N. C.

Marion, N. C.

LAWRENCE HOGAN.

Architectural Planning

SIR: An architect, sitting in his office these quiet days, has ample opportunity to consider the situation in the building field. There are a few jobs here and there but little to encourage the profession that there is activity ahead. In this consideration one risks the criticism of the purist who objects to the fact that the modern architect is no longer a dreaming esthete; he has come very close to people—to men of affairs—to the actual problem of how and why a building should be erected, for he knows that normal and intelligent activity means work, whether it be in the office, factory or home.

One has read of the juggling of vast sums by astute bankers, their subsequent smashing with agony to thousands of people engaged in the myriad details of planning and building. There are draughtsmen, clerks, engineers, superintendents, stenographers, a horde of mechanics, startled to find their work cut from under them and wondering just what to do about it. The architect himself is helpless—he is obviously a victim of conditions completely out of his control. What he has watched, however, for some years past is the group of men who have injected themselves into the building field, purely as a business venture, fortified with no technical knowledge and with complete absence of any artistic understanding. They burst into a special and highly trained industry, inflated work to an astounding degree, forced jobs at breakneck speed and incidentally juggled a new variety of finance to such dizzy convolutions that a crash was inevitable.

The present moratorium in building makes one question the finality of their efforts. There is no need here to discuss design or taste. Whether modern architecture is to have gilt or silver trimmings or whether the hard-shelled classicists will persist in whining, is immaterial. What is pertinent is to what extent the individual, backed by friendly resources, can do precisely what he chooses with his property, assuming deference to the present

restrictions of the various city departments. It is clear that loose financing has produced buildings that should never have been built. One structure would proceed with money intended to complete its immediate predecessor—sooner or later the bubble would burst. In certain sections, the garment district, for example, between Thirty-fourth and Forty-second Streets, the traffic and freight conditions, due to a wild scramble to supply questionably needed space, became more absurd every time a new building opened. One knows the principle of sucking tenants from one neighborhood to fill another, leaving another group of sick property owners startled at a sudden and uncalled-for calamity.

This bonanza of building was no doubt a happy instant to many people—building material concerns were enlarged, laborers and craftsmen poured into the city. The visitor marveled at tall buildings, the public congratulated itself on possession of the tallest monuments in the world, little conscious of the ratio of occupied space or the red ink on the company's ledgers. Now that the party is over there are unhappy, worried people puzzled as to the means of earning a living. There is, of course, no immediate remedy, there will be no legerdemain to reproduce prosperity, but it may be of value to see what constructive suggestion might come out of the difficulty.

If the problem is broad—citywide—there is no doubt but that consideration of the activities of the municipal authorities close to such work is vital. As we now see it, someone starts a driveway here or there with waving of silver trowels, a street is widened, but just where is there a comprehensive scheme for ten or twenty-years' growth of a busy, restless community? Under royal decree there came the plans of Paris and Berlin. The boulevards of Baron Haussmann are still being realized in the French capital. London, in spite of rock-ribbed tradition, a mass of monuments of sentimental as well as artistic value, has a clear picture of what it is doing; Chicago is completing one large development, its lake front, mainly due to the persistence of a few far-sighted citizens, among them Burnham the architect. A dozen German cities, among them Frankfurt and Hamburg, are likewise proceeding, guided by complete plans that attempt at least a reasonable guess as to what the future city should present.

In New York the Regional Plan has been studied for some time past, but it might be a fair question to know just what proportion of the public has the slightest idea of its existence or the vaguest conception of their own interest in the scheme. One of two forces is primal. Either a government can impose a plan or a program on the people or the public can, by its interest and force, direct its leaders to a plan that proposes immediate action and intelligent provision for the future. To avoid the hit-or-miss attitude of the present day, might it not be of value to stimulate this public to an investigation of a number of factors that would necessarily form part of the great plan of new New York, as follows:

1. A broad housing program. Consideration of the slum districts, quarters for the so-called white-collar group that miss the benefits of subsidized projects.
2. A freight program, possibly in the nature of the Chicago system of underground rails and in spite of the complicated subsurface construction now in existence. This element would cover produce to and from New York—market systems, waterfront shipping, docks, terminals—the handling of mail.
3. A complete traffic plan—coordinating through and local roadways—the river drives—crosstown tunnels, bridges, proper access to the city from the various boroughs.
4. A park and playground scheme. It is late to propose breathing spots in the city proper, though the increase in adjoining land values might conceivably warrant the condemnation of considerable property for such purpose.
5. A parking and vehicle analysis that would eliminate the wrangle with the traffic policeman and make the use of the automobile in the city more efficacious.

These are but a few suggestions in the larger view of the city, as a whole. They have been discussed *ad nauseum*, but usually by a special committee in some group that has filed the report with proper thanks to the authors. It is possible that with the demand for more constructive imagination, and a plan that looks ahead—ten, twenty, fifty, a hundred years—work might develop that would spell the end of mushroom growth and provide jobs for our children when they are ready to carry on.

New York City.

ELY JACQUES KAHN.

Mergers, Pfd.

Concentration in American Industry, by Harry W. Laidler. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company. 501 pages. \$3.75.

DR. LAIDLER presents us with an imposing monograph which, among other things, discloses that as serious a breach has been produced in the anti-trust laws, by the current economic folkways, as has lately occurred, through the operation of somewhat more convivial folkways, in the prohibition amendment. Neither of these majestic laws stands as an insurmountable deterrent to American citizens who have either serious business or serious drinking in hand—which teaches us, I suppose, that folkways are stronger than statutes. It is true that where the Eighteenth Amendment is broken bluntly head on, the Sherman Act tends to be sidled around, with rather more opportunity for the legal profession to exercise its larynx, and to place its feet firmly in a remarkably lucrative trough. But that the spirit of the immortal Trust Buster has been remorselessly violated, only a lawyer can refuse to admit.

While the Sherman Act still stands on the statute books, Dr. Laidler adduces many examples of monopoly and near-monopoly. I have taken the liberty of casting some of the more flagrant cases into tabular form. But the table printed below gives only a sample of the prevailing tendency. In prepared foods, the General Foods Corporation, Quaker Oats and Kellogg occupy an increasingly commanding position; in dairy products, National Dairy and Borden's can regard their competitors with reasonable equanimity; in paper, International Paper and Power can bid its rivals go jump in the lake; in elevators, radiators, furniture, vacuum cleaners, a few huge concerns are sitting exceptionally pretty; in textiles and shoe manufacturing,

great consolidations are the order of the day. The chains now claim 20 percent of all retail sales, eight billions out of forty, while in 1927 their share was only 12.5 percent. In some lines the chains completely dominate the field. Even in agriculture, the last refuge of rugged individualism, chain farms and factory farms, with due corporate set-ups, are steadily advancing.

Nor do the figures as set forth tell the whole story. For instance, in the four corporations dominating the power industry, what is the ratio of interlocking directorships? In the eight corporations dominating the anthracite fields? Samuel Insull in 1930 was serving on more than eighty boards, Richard B. Mellon on nearly fifty, Percy A. Rockefeller on sixty-eight, Albert H. Wiggin on fifty, Charles E. Mitchell on thirty-two. Not until we know the full extent of the community of interest, not to say gentlemen's agreement, can we give in cold percentages the measure of monopoly or concentration. Unhappily, such facts are difficult to come by quantitatively, notorious as they are qualitatively.

Again, we must reckon with the amazing development of the trade association. In an industry where no great constellation takes command, where competition appears to be rife amid a thousand small fry, the trade association can give, and alas has given, the spirit of the Sherman Law another sock in the eye. Are you aware of what price cutting is now called in trade-association circles? It is called a *crime*. The price cutter should be incarcerated; he should be lynched! Let your mind rest on this nugget for an instant. To lower prices is a criminal offense. To lower them from what? Obviously from some standard price level. Since when has free competition known standard price levels; since when has it been a crime for a man to sell his own goods at any price he jolly well pleases? What else does free competition mean? If you take away individual freedom to fix prices, you put a depth

CONCENTRATION IN AMERICAN INDUSTRY

Industry	Number or name of dominant corporations	Extent of domination
Iron ore.....	U. S. Steel Corporation.....	50-75% U. S. reserves
Steel.....	U. S. Steel Corporation.....	40% mill capacity
Nickel.....	International Nickel Company.....	90% world reserves
Aluminum.....	Aluminum Company of America.....	Monopoly of bauxite reserves
Telephone.....	American Telephone and Telegraph.....	80% U. S. service
Telegraph.....	Western Union.....	75% U. S. service
Automobile.....	Ford and General Motors.....	75% U. S. production
Parlor car.....	Pullman Company.....	Virtual monopoly
Agricultural machinery.....	International Harvester.....	50% U. S. production
Shoe machinery.....	U. S. Shoe Machinery Company.....	Virtual monopoly
Sewing machines.....	Singer Company.....	Dominates field
Radio.....	Radio Corporation.....	Dominates field
Sugar.....	American Sugar Refining Company.....	Dominates field
Anthracite coal.....	8 companies.....	80% U. S. tonnage
Steel.....	9 companies.....	80% mill capacity
Sulphur.....	2 companies.....	Most of world's deposits
Oil.....	5 companies.....	33% U. S. production
Meat packing.....	2 companies.....	Over 50% U. S. production
Bread.....	4 companies.....	25% U. S. production
Cigarettes.....	3 companies.....	70% U. S. production
Electrical equipment.....	2 companies.....	Over 50% U. S. production
Railroad rolling stock.....	2 companies.....	Dominate field
Chemical.....	3 companies.....	Dominate field
Matches.....	2 companies.....	Dominate field
Rubber.....	4 companies.....	Dominate field
Moving pictures.....	3 companies.....	Dominate field
Aviation.....	3 companies.....	Dominate field
Electric power.....	4 groups.....	Dominate field
Insurance.....	10 companies.....	66% insurance in force
Banking.....	1% of banks control.....	99% resources

bomb under the whole institution. Trade associations are in effect setting or trying to set price standards, and are putting bitter pressure on those who undersell the standard. This price maintenance they call "constructive competition," but they might equally well term it noncompetitive competition.

Laissez-faire, attacked by the bacilli of mergers, interlocking directorates and trade associations, is at the point of death, and it is about time we threw open the windows and called honestly for the mortician.

Dr. Laidler has documented this sorry state of affairs with admirable industry and thoroughness. His volume abounds in figures and footnotes. It is a just and fitting tombstone to an era which has passed. Free competition in the classical sense is moribund; the Sherman Law was a sheet of tissue paper across Niagara. Well, what of it? Dr. Laidler does not give way to tears, nor shall your reviewer. Neither of us has the slightest interest in replacing Humpty Dumpty upon his wall. Let the merry mergers merge, and the trade associations cry criminal. What American industry needs above all else, in my opinion, is coördination—an integration of supply to demand, and an end to the crucifying wastes and leakages of free competition. The more promptly a given industry acts as an intelligent unit instead of a mob of maniacs, the better I shall be pleased. And when it has rationalized itself, I shall be even more pleased if, like the railroads, it is declared to be "affected with a public interest" and neatly taken under the wing of the government. One-hundred-percent monopolies should hardly be permitted to go their untrammelled way. But perhaps all that we ultimate consumers would need to do under the circumstances would be to collect excess profits under the income-tax law. There, thank God, is a statute made of something stouter than tissue paper.

As the years go by, the philosopher may amuse himself by observing the phenomenon of cultural lag; in this case it is expressed in the endless and wordy yearning of business men and politicians for a condition which no longer exists in the main stream of American economic life. Dr. Hoover can always be depended upon to deposit his allotted garland.

STUART CHASE.

Socrates Talks On—and On

Plato's Britannia, freely rendered into English by Douglas Woodruff. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 222 pages. \$2.50.

IT WOULD be distressing to believe that Americans are so self-absorbed that even satire must be aimed at only ourselves if we are to enjoy it. But we are tempted to arrive at that conclusion after looking over the new sixth edition of Douglas Woodruff's "Plato's American Republic" (Dutton) and comparing it with the "Britannia," his newest skyrocket. We can predict that most American readers will find the "Britannia" dull.

Socrates goes about London and Oxford and finds men given over to things other than philosophy. "The English are extraordinarily gifted," he observes, "at believing that what they prefer is in fact the nature of things." They got to be very rich during the reign of the Great Queen and came to think they should continue to pile up possessions. Other men should want nothing better than to consume what they manufacture. Socrates says the English might better go to raising pigs. Is that satire? It sounds very much like sober truth to one who stands out-

side both Attic thought and English muddle, although, of course, how many of the forty million English could subsist on pig-raising remains a question—and not a platonic one.

Mr. Woodruff takes his subjects too seriously and their foibles not seriously enough. It is doubtful that any satirist can save his castigated fellow men if he really thinks they are worth saving. There are plums in the duff, to be sure, occasional sentences and suggestions, such as the one advocating a Minister of Accidents who could better distribute the numerous disasters and kill off the right people. Gilbert Murray is neatly hit off, a natural friend of the Greeks who wants Socrates to address a garden party for the League of Nations Union and thinks he might be asked to talk fifteen minutes on the air—"preferably about nothing." But mostly we are told in long-drawn-out phrases that the English are given to a materialistic faith and that the system they spent a century in building up is not working out very satisfactorily. No one can doubt it; but no one can be surprised that Socrates would perceive it.

If our lack of interest is not due to our missing the joke because it is not on ourselves, it must be that Mr. Woodruff knows the English too well and loves them too much to be funny about their troubles.

LYMAN BRYSON.

Europe as Will and Idea

A Cultural History of the Modern Age: Vol. II, by Egon Friedell. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 476 pages. \$5.

HERR FRIEDEL'S ambition, as described in the introduction to the first volume of this work, is "to sketch . . . a spiritual costume history of the last six centuries, showing at the same time the Platonic idea of each age and the thought which inwardly inspired it and was its soul." Every epoch, in his opinion, has its peculiar way of viewing and reacting to the external world; and he seeks for its expression in philosophical and religious beliefs, its exemplification in the personalities of representative men, and its consequences in art and literature, morals and amusements, costumes and rules of etiquette.

In his first volume he ascribed the disappearance of the medieval spirit to the nominalism of the later schoolmen; upon their denial of the reality of universals followed an age of despair, the fifteenth century with its chaotic sensuality; modern history begins with the Renaissance which, compelled by the schoolmen to choose either faith or reason, abandoned faith; but its growing energies were almost drowned by the bloodshed of another age of despair, the period of the religious wars. The present volume discusses the Baroque, governed by Descartes, who sought to express all reality in terms of mathematical logic, yet was conscious of a mystical world wholly divorced from matter; and the Enlightenment, with its cult of clarity and simplicity and return to nature. The emphasis everywhere is not on the resemblances between the past and the present, but on what alone makes history worthy of study—those revolutions of thought by which each generation becomes incomprehensible to its predecessors and descendants.

This is an ambitious project; and if it fails, it is not through lack of talent. Herr Friedell is a remarkably vivid and penetrating writer, able to characterize an individual or an epoch in a couple of epigrams and a well chosen anecdote; as a gallery of portraits, each of them clearly distinguished by a wise use of exaggeration, his work recalls the best traditions of the great age of his-

toriography, the eighteenth century; Leibnitz and Louis XIV, Voltaire and Frederick the Great are delineated with an almost Tacitean crispness and aptness of phrasing. Describing the fifteenth century, the *Grand Siècle* and the age of the Rococo, Herr Friedell uses color with a richness very unusual among historians; the physical appearance, the customs and morals, the obsessing images and beliefs of those ages are made vivid and concrete.

This is excellent popular history; it is not, however, a work of permanent importance. Much of the material is insufficiently digested; we are treated to barren summaries of philosophical systems which are not related to the main theme of the narrative; in certain chapters—more especially in those dealing with the Enlightenment and the Romantic Movement—the author, having failed to soak himself in the spirit of the times, gives merely a chronicle of facts and a few disconnected portraits of individuals. The selection of material has been dictated by previous historians; very little use has been made of original authorities; events are often mentioned because they are an accepted part of history, not because they have any bearing on Herr Friedell's theme. There is a marked Teutonic bias; disproportionate space is given to Germany and to German writers of second-rate importance; Luther, Frederick the Great and Goethe become demigods; while the English are condemned as hypocrites and the French as forever oscillating between the poles of pedantry and folly.

Each age has to reinterpret the past in the light of its own obsessions; and the historian who does not bring to his subject preconceived criteria of significance and methods of interpretation will be submerged in a chaos of facts. The nineteenth century saw world history as a record of progress toward freedom and democracy; the twentieth, feeling that the springs of living emotion are dry, that man has lost contact with the soil and become sapless and exhausted, looks into the past to discover where he lost touch with reality, natural or supernatural. Spengler, seeking historical justification for the feeling that the modern world is a desert, produced a work of charlatanry because of his prodigious vanity, his conviction that his method of interpretation was not merely useful (as a scientific hypothesis is useful) but was the only true one; Friedell, embarked on a kindred but less grandiose enterprise, has fallen short of success through inadequate preparation.

HENRY BAMFORD PARKES.

Broadway In Two Tenses

Guys and Dolls, by Damon Runyon. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company. \$2.

I AM NOT trying to say why it is, but it seems sure that unless Mr. Damon Runyon is giving one and all the phonus bolonus, the citizens along Broadway have a very quaint way of talking indeed. I do not think it is so much that their pick of words is different from that of the rest of us, for if you will ask me I will say that there is no line of Mr. Damon Runyon's book which will give a moment's pain to anyone, even if he never makes it a point to keep watch of the wellsprings of the American slanguage. In fact, I will go so far as to say that personally I will talk more slanguage in ten minutes as a usual thing than you will be able to find in Mr. Damon Runyon's book. No, what is very noticeable about the talk along Mr. Damon Runyon's Broadway is the way in which the citizens one and all limit themselves to the use of two tenses, namely the present and the future, no

matter if they are talking of the far past, the near past, the present, the future, or what I will call the hypothetical past, present or future. And also I cannot help noticing that the citizens one and all seem to have a great yen for advancing their various narratives in a manner which will remind you of the style of a good First Reader, providing you go to grammar school about the time that I do, personally, and I am not such an old bird at that.

Yet that is not saying that you will find it slow going when you set out to read Mr. Damon Runyon's book. In fact, I will say that personally I find his tales move along with the best of them, and that what I will call the slow stretches are very few and far between indeed. Now if you will ask me what is the rating of his thirteen tales if they are put on the line against those of Mr. Anton Chekhov or Mr. Guy de Maupassant, I will have to say that personally I will not lay a penalty bet of Bohemian Club gin that they will not occasionally lose by a nose. And I will also say that personally I find a few of them that are very rich with Cinderella flavoring and one thing and another. Yet even these are not hard reading, at that. It does not seem to me personally that a great deal of character comes out in Mr. Damon Runyon's tales, because when you try to see these people he talks about in the round, you will find they have about as much round as a slice of toast has. But I think this is all to the good, at that, for if you will ask me I will tell you that personally I think of all these guys and dolls like the citizen who does Mr. Damon Runyon's talking for him thinks of The Brain, when he claims that if there is one thing The Brain never has it is a conscience. I mean I will say that if there is one thing these characters never have it is a character, and I think I will be right, at that.

MURRAY GODWIN.

A Great Mathematician

The Foundations of Mathematics, by Frank Plumpton Ramsey. International Library of Psychology, Philosophy and Scientific Method. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 292 pages. \$4.50.

THE PREMATURE death of Frank Plumpton Ramsey in January, 1930, before he was twenty-seven, deprived contemporary philosophy of one of its most acute and profound thinkers. Perhaps not since C. S. Peirce has there been a thinker who combined such great technical ability with great power of mind in attacking the fundamental problems of mathematics, logic, economics and philosophy.

The most important part of Ramsey's published and finished work was in the field of mathematical logic. He belonged to the great tradition of Frege, Peano, Whitehead and Russell, and in a sense may be said to have completed their work on the logical foundations of mathematics. These mathematicians believed that "pure mathematics was part of formal logic, that all the ideas of pure mathematics could be defined in terms which were not distinctively mathematical"; . . . that mathematics could be defined in terms of a single set of fundamental concepts and relations, and be deduced from a single set of fundamental propositions; and that ultimately every mathematical concept and proposition would be constructed out of a few simple propositions of formal logic.

It was the great achievement of Whitehead and Russell in their "Principia Mathematica" to have deduced pure mathematics by strict symbolic reasoning from a small num-

ber of logical propositions, such as, if p is true, then either p or q is true. In order to avoid the contradictions inherent in the famous paradoxes of the Theory of Aggregates, Whitehead and Russell invented the Theory of Types, by means of which the thesis and antithesis of such contradictions were ruled out as being strictly nonsensical. In its simple form the Theory of Types asserts that a particular concept has *meaning* only for objects of a particular type. That is, the same predicate cannot significantly be applied to more than one type of subject. Unfortunately, the Theory of Types, while offering a solution of the various paradoxes, invalidated some important forms of mathematical reasoning—the theory of real numbers, for example, and the use of the Dedekindian section in mathematical analysis. To save these branches of mathematics, Whitehead and Russell introduced the Axiom of Reducibility, which asserted that for any characteristic of a higher order, there was an equivalent characteristic of the lowest order. This axiom saved the theory of real numbers, but since it lacked the self-evidence of a proper logical axiom it served as the basis of an attack by skeptical mathematicians (Brouwer, Hilbert, Weyl) upon the entire structure of the “*Principia Mathematica*.”

In an attempt to obviate this unsatisfactory state of affairs, which threatened to destroy the foundations of classical mathematics, Ramsey reconstructed the system of Whitehead and Russell. His work was largely based upon the logical discoveries of Ludwig Wittgenstein. Whitehead and Russell had believed that the only true propositions of logic and mathematics were those which contained merely logical and mathematical concepts. But Wittgenstein discovered that a proposition is a proposition of logic only when it can be reduced to a tautology. This led Ramsey to the theory that the *content* of a proposition must always be completely generalized, but its *form* must always be that of a tautology. It was upon this theory that Ramsey erected his logical system. He avoided the defects of Whitehead and Russell by using an “objective” theory of predicative functions. Ramsey demonstrated that the mathematical contradictions of the type of “the class of all classes which are not members of themselves, etc.,” and the linguistic contradictions of the type of “I am lying, etc.,” could be removed by the use of a very simple Theory of Types. This simplified theory made it unnecessary to assume the troublesome Axiom of Reducibility in order to save such important sections of mathematics as analysis.

Ramsey's work was still in a tentative stage when he died. This must be emphasized, for it is likely that had he lived he might have been able to remove the flaws of certain of his later positions. For example, in 1929 he adopted the “finitist” view of mathematics. This point of view rejects the notion of the existence of any actual infinite aggregate. Ramsey, unlike Weyl, must have realized that the Axiom of Infinity does not assert the actual existence of an infinite number of objects in the real world. There are infinite orders in the world like the order of natural numbers, but there are no physical entities the number of whose actual parts is infinite. The Axiom of Infinity is needed in mathematics because it assures the mathematician freedom from contradiction in the whole range of mathematical possibility.

The general philosophic position of Ramsey was an ever changing and experimental one. Like Peirce, who together with Wittgenstein was the great influence in his thought, he never put his views into a complete and consistent system of philosophy. To Wittgenstein, whom he considered the greatest of modern philosophers, he was indebted for

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most of his logical and philosophic views. Ramsey believed that essentially philosophy was a system of definitions, that logic consisted of tautologies, and mathematics of identities. He regarded as nonsensical all topics that could not be reduced to matters of science or technical philosophy. It was his opinion that philosophy must help clarify the meaning of scientific concepts. In this he apparently followed Peirce in his contention that the meaning of a concept is to be found in “all the conceivable experimental phenomena which the affirmation or denial of the concept could imply.” It is apparent that Ramsey, in moving toward a kind of pragmatism, was approaching the position held by many contemporary philosophers (Wittgenstein, Schlick, Reichenbach, Carnap, Bridgman). They maintain that fundamentally philosophy is the pursuit and clarification of *meaning* of scientific concepts. This philosophy breaks down when the criterion of truth is taken to be the experimental verification of propositions. Whether Ramsey could have avoided this philosophic impasse is, of course, impossible to say.

The profundity and range of Ramsey's interests are so great that the work discussed thus far is but a fragment of his achievements. There still remain his solution of the *Entscheidungsproblem* (the problem of finding a general procedure for determining the consistency of a logical formula); and his logical analyses of universals, particulars, belief, truth, probability, a theory of theories, etc. Mention also should be made of his papers in mathematical economics (not included in this volume), one of which J. M. Keynes called “one of the most remarkable contributions to mathematical economics ever made.”

Ramsey, like Peirce and Wittgenstein, is bound to become one of the great seminal sources of modern thought. It is for this reason that the reader is urged not to be

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frightened away from the book because of Ramsey's use of what Oxford logicians disparagingly call Cambridge technicalities, but to study his papers as brilliant contributions to some of the most difficult and abstract subjects in the world.

HYMAN ROSEN.

Book Notes

DRAMA

MASKS, MIMES AND MIRACLES: Studies in the Popular Theatre, by Allardyce Nicoll. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 408 pages, illustrated. \$10.

The author of this volume disclaims the more lofty assumptions of scholarship; he seeks rather a readable account, for more or less general use, of the history of the popular unliterary theatre from its Greek beginnings down to the decline of the *commedia dell'arte* in the seventeenth century. Such an account has not before been available in English. Professor Nicoll, without advancing any important theories or interpretations of his own, has managed to bring into a single history much of what such distinguished scholars as Dietrich and Reich in Germany and Magnin in France have contributed to the subject in a more special and original, but less accessible, form.

A greater proportion of space is given to the *commedia dell'arte* than to the other phases of popular drama included in this book. This is due partly to the mass of *commedia* script, prints and records that have come to light, and the great amount of discussion and study that has lately appeared in this field; partly to the fact that of late years we have realized more and more that our modern theatre in its fullest sense of an art composed of many elements—dance, song, improvisation, acting, words, and so on—can be best studied, defended and developed in the light of this Italian comedy.

In the *commedia dell'arte* section will be found many details of recent discovery or fresh interest. But to some readers already familiar here and blessed with a workable knowledge of the masked comedy and also of the mystery plays and miracles of the Middle Ages, the earlier parts of the book will be more useful. We find there a compact indication of the progress of the mimes, the Dorian Mime, Epicharmus, the Phylakes and finally the Atellanae, to be followed and superseded by the Mimic Drama of Rome. The Phylakes remain to us largely in pictorial records; a remarkably full indication of how the Phylax looked is found in the plates taken from vases, marbles and inscriptions. The Atellanae, on the other hand, coming later, remain to us in literary references, to be found in every grade of author, from Cicero, Suetonius and Tacitus down.

Professor Nicoll treats at length the state of the mimes in medieval popular entertainments, the attitude of the Church, the secular drama and the religious drama of this period, and comes finally in the middle of the volume to the *commedia dell'arte*. This section of his history he prefaces with the three theories as to the origin of the *commedia*. In the eighteenth century the Atellanae, first Oscan and then throughout the Roman towns, with the stock figures and masks, the improvisation, the popular satire, were credited with being the source of the later popular form. Reich maintains the theory that the Atellanae died in the Dark Ages and that it was the pure mime, with its realism, its stock roles and so on, that had survived. This mime, though it passed from the Roman scene, went on in the Western provinces and especially in the East; where in such places as Constantinople, for example, it existed in its old form until the fifteenth century, when, with the fall of that city, it was carried into Italy again. To the relics of the old classic popular theatre and the folk additions to it, this Eastern influence brought a new confirmation and fresh blood. From these two theories, both allowing a descent from classic times, another theory wholly differs. This theory asserts that the *commedia dell'arte* grew wholly out of two things: a renewed study of the classic drama, and the Renaissance tendency toward satire.

FICTION

HER BODY SPEAKS, by Aaron Marc Stein. *New York: Covici-Friede. \$2.50.*

Here is another novel devoted to the characterization of futility and futile people. The story concerns a neurotic woman whose serenity of life is disturbed by witnessing a murder, and whose emotional difficulties have a disastrous effect upon the lives of those about her—the man who has loved her for years, her maid and the maid's fiancé. The style is an unsuccessful alternation of two methods—psychological analysis and stream of consciousness.

THE THREE BROTHERS, by Edwin Muir. *New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. \$2.50.*

There is no accumulation of data on manners and customs, and no obvious evocation of the past, in this fine novel of sixteenth-century Scotland. Edwin Muir presents the age of John Knox as a time of changing beliefs, of controversy and skepticism, an age with an inescapable resemblance to our own. Each book revolves around a death: in the first, the murder of Cardinal Beaton, with its effect on David's childish imagination; in the second, the death of the mother; and the deaths of David's sweetheart and the older brother in the last. In the end David's life is controlled by his fear of death. This colors his attitude toward his brothers, his idea of God and, finally, his vision of life, expressed in a kind of mystical lyricism in his diary: "I saw ships heeled over forever at the same slant by an invisible and eternal storm, and the wind like a solid rock leaning against the sails, and the ocean a stationary fury of mountain crests which would never subside." One is only disappointed that David reaches no clear realization of himself. "If there is a God," he asks, "why doesna He tell us, why doesna He guide us? I wouldna leave a dog in the state He leaves us in."

Contributors

CHARLES A. BEARD, the well known historian and political scientist, recently published "The American Leviathan: the Republic in the Machine Age," which he wrote in collaboration with his son, William Beard. He is at present living on a farm in New Milford, Connecticut.

J. B. S. HARDMAN, editor of *The Advance*, official organ of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, is at present delivering a series of lectures at Columbia University on "Practical Problems of Trade Unionism," the subject of the series which begins in this issue of *The New Republic*.

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON, the author of several volumes of biography, the most recent one being an anti-humanist biography of Rousseau which is to appear in two weeks, has recently published with his wife a translation of Jean-Marie Carré's life of Rimbaud. The translation entitled "A Season in Hell," bears the imprint of Macaulay Company and contains selected poems from Rimbaud, translated by various hands.

STUART CHASE, whose most recent book "Mexico" is on the best-seller lists of many bookstores, is also the author of "Men and Machines" and "Prosperity: Fact or Myth?"

LYMAN BRYSON, who has been executive director of the California Association for Adult Education since 1929, is a contributor of short stories and reviews to various magazines.

HENRY BAMFORD PARKES, author of "Jonathan Edwards, the Fiery Puritan," which was published last fall, is an instructor in the History Department at Washington Square College.

H. BONER, a graduate of the University of Colorado, who has been doing work for an M.A. at Columbia, was the winner this year of the Van Rensselaer prize for poetry offered by the University.

MURRAY GOODWIN, contributor to *The American Mercury* and to many left-wing literary magazines, is at present free-lancing in New York.

HYMAN ROSEN is a mathematical physicist and a frequent contributor to scientific journals.

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THE *cost* of telephoning is as little as it can be made. Its *value* can be infinite.

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It is the means of extending your personality. Unlike commodities, telephone calls cannot be made wholesale. Each one is a personal service. Each goes when and where you wish. At your request you have five thousand or five million dollars' worth of property at your command, two or three people or perhaps a hundred attending the wires along which your voice travels. It is the work of the Bell System to do this well and cheaply. Its

hundreds of thousands of trained workers must keep every part of its 4000 million dollars' worth of equipment ready for instant use.

Here is a business run on the smallest margin of profit consistent with service, security and expansion. Its operation and maintenance have the benefit of the continual research of the 5000 members of Bell Laboratories, the general and technical staff work of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, and the production economies effected by Western Electric.

Every resource of the Bell System is devoted to making your service clear, quick and inexpensive. As new telephones are added, as improvements are made, you get constantly greater satisfaction and value.

★ AMERICAN TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY ★

